



# THE QUEST OF LEADERSHIP

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE  
CIRCUMSTANCES OF INDIA

BY

COLONEL DONALD PORTWAY,  
T.D., M.A., A.M INST., C.E.,

President and Senior Tutor of St Catharine's College, Cambridge

BOMBAY

THACKER & CO., LTD

1945

PUBLISHED IN 1945

F. T. A. 431101 is taken by J. J. Klemmer, a Jewish Jeweler  
imported from Hungary 3 years before from A. P. G. A. by  
C. H. H. for Theodor A. C. Ltd. London from him by

## PREFACE

Some apology is perhaps needed that an engineer, a member of one of the least vocal of the professions, should attempt a contribution, however slight, to a subject that is in the main a study peculiar to psychologists. It is perhaps the very fact that he makes no claim to psychological knowledge that justifies the venture, for the psychologist who writes on this all-absorbing topic is apt to be both profound and professional, and the learned treatise, whatever the subject, is heavy reading for the layman.

The writer can at least claim to have had unusual opportunities for practical experience of the subject in a lifetime devoted not only to the training of young engineers, but also to close personal relations with students of all types in the work of the Tutor of a Cambridge College.

Due to the disturbed times he has spent over twelve years of his life in uniform, with special opportunities for contacts with young officers of all three services. A period of several years as a Master at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth provided useful experience in secondary education. Three years in the Army Selection Directorates of Britain and India have been of special value.

Leadership is a universal attribute and there never has been and never will be a master race. But each country has its special problems and those of India, with its ever

growing importance in the comity of nations have received special consideration.

The privilege of advancing years must be claimed for some musing without method and for occasional digression from the subject of the title. Various books and articles on cognate topics have been perused by the writer and some of these are mentioned in the text. Others have not been acknowledged owing to no details having been noted. The writer apologises for any use that he has made of these in a process of unconscious cerebration.

D. P.

## CONTENTS

PREFACE	iii
CHAP I Leadership	1
CHAP II The testing of Intelligence	22
CHAP III The Interview	44
CHAP IV Personality	63
CHAP V Examinations	83
CHAP VI Education for Leadership in India	97
CHAP VII Leadership in India's Industry and Commerce	116
CHAP VIII India at the Cross roads	131

## CHAPTER I

# LEADERSHIP

The bulwarks of a city are its men

Leadership is not merely the art of becoming nor even of remaining a leader, it is the art of leading, and the difference is fundamental. This was recognised at least as long ago as in Roman days, when Tacitus wrote of Germanicus as "a man whom the whole world would have judged capable of ruling, had he never ruled." Recent years have amply confirmed that the qualities required both to obtain and to retain high office are far from those involved in the successful fulfilment of such heavy responsibilities.

Psychologists have made exhaustive study of the qualities required of a good leader. Psychology has strayed a long way from the study that is suggested by the derivation of the word and can best be defined as the study of behaviour. This matter of leadership is therefore of high importance to psychologists and it is a subject that is also of the greatest interest to the layman. The qualities required of a leader are numerous and also complex, as they vary in accordance with the type of group that is to be controlled. The group may even be composed of the same individuals, but the purpose of the leadership may be quite different, so that we are concerned with the character of the leader, the character of the followers, and the nature of the problems with which the group has to deal. Thus the qualities required of an

outstanding bishop are far removed from those required of a successful admiral or of a prime-minister. Furthermore the qualities required of a war time prime-minister are altogether different from those required when peace reigns supreme. In time of peace and in a democratic state the successful politician must be closely in touch with the man in the street and must act—within reason—as the interpreter of the national will. This is indeed the weakness of democracy and was the cause of our failure to re-arm in the years that the locusts have eaten. The great majority of the British nation was then most reluctant to face the increase in taxation that re-armament involved and was satisfied with vain and futile babbling about "moral re-armament". The old maxim "Trust in God and keep your powder dry" was changed into "Trust in God and you will need no powder at all". In time of war action and not interpretation is demanded of a statesman whether of a democratic or a totalitarian state. He must then be a dictator who will co-ordinate all the energies of the state in the common task of achieving victory.

A leader such as is understood by a free people is one who inspires free men with the feeling of moral obligation to follow him and this involves high purpose clearly realised and courageously pursued. There is, however one fundamental that is required of a great leader whether in the Services or in industry whether in an outstanding position or in the less important work required of a junior officer. It is that he must have a good knowledge of his job and as this involves intelligence and training it is education that is a matter of vital importance. No man can secure the confidence of the group

that he leads unless he is efficient at his job and no one will be efficient at his job unless he knows it really well It all seems so absurdly obvious, but like many obvious things it is so often forgotten, and that is why so many leaders are unsuccessful since they lack this fundamental essential

It must be clearly appreciated that in some shape or form leadership involves privilege, and this applies to all communities whether communist, totalitarian, or democratic Under the last mentioned system we like to think that, as the American Declaration of Independence puts it, "all men are born free and equal". Men may require freedom if they are to be capable and self-reliant citizens, but freedom is conditional on order, and there is need for leadership in a democracy even more urgently than in other forms of government By all accounts the privileges of the Russian Commissar were quite as extensive as those of the Nazi Gauleiter There is reason and logic in this, for the leader is the representative of the group he leads, the real danger of the association of privilege with authority is that it involves the formation of a privileged class As long as the privileges are regarded as belonging to the office, all is well, but when they are regarded as rights belonging to the class itself the real complications arise

Leadership based on social prestige has been in general the system in vogue in England for many centuries, and on the whole it has not worked too badly The tradition of honest and painstaking service has been strong in the ruling class, and although there have been abuses, the leadership was on the whole conscientious and competent even if unimaginative With the decline of the caste

system and the increase in bureaucracy, intelligence becomes the ruling factor in leadership, it is then of vital importance that the new governing class should build up an adequate tradition of social service and should demand no privilege over and above that which represents a fair return for the service which it renders. In a country such as India where caste is still in the ascendancy, problems of leadership are still more complex.

Leadership is not a mere matter of the management of men or of parties, nor is it the manipulation of opinion least of all is it the avoidance of mistakes. Many a great leader makes many mistakes but he will never be a great leader without high purpose clearly defined and courageously pursued. Gladstone is a good example in the political sphere of a leader possessing moral authority and the power to create enthusiasm. It was his ability to appeal to that sense of high purpose that enabled him to exercise the moral suasion so necessary to take his followers where he wanted them to go. His was a moral leadership in the life of the nation and was based on a hatred of evil doing. It was this that inspired his denunciation of Abdul, the Turkish tyrant, and the trend of history might have been different if more recent prime-ministers had possessed the courage to attack Hitler and Mussolini in like manner. Greatness in a man can perhaps be estimated by the degree to which he has affected his own age and indirectly the ages that follow. It is a tragedy that so many men—well intentioned—have influenced their time in an adverse way. In the sixteenth century, for example, contemporary Europe was influenced in a fundamental way by Machiavelli and Calvin but of these two

one defended the ruthlessness of princes, the other proclaimed the cruelty of God

Of so complex a quality as leadership it is difficult to generalise, but most psychologists concur that leaders in any social organisation may be roughly grouped into three main categories.—

Firstly the institutional type This type of man maintains his position by virtue of his office. Such a leader is emphatic of rank, conservative in outlook, punctilious in matters of drill and discipline, and stereotyped in his reactions He is in general more successful when he comes of a social class superior to that of the majority of his following If this is not the case—as for example in the old-fashioned variety of sergeant-major—insistence on matters of formal discipline is likely to be even more strongly exacted We all know the institutional type of leader and soldiers of by-gone days knew him even better We may laugh at this type, and call him Colonel Blimp, but these Colonel Blimps are right psychologically if in no other respect Indeed the man who lacks those personal qualities that enable him to dominate his men and to assert himself by his own force of character, may yet succeed in leadership to a limited extent by suiting his methods to his own limitations, and by using his authority to prop up his weaknesses in other directions

Secondly, the dominant type This is the man who maintains his authority by virtue of his own personality and his innate force of character It is of this type, and of this type alone that the dictum is true that leaders are born and not made, and even then it is only true to a strictly limited extent Leadership of this kind can never

be attained by mere assertiveness and initiative know ledge of the job and speed in execution, all come into the picture as well. This type of man is confident in action and prepared himself to do anything that he expects his followers to do. He is not afraid of making mistakes because he knows that his power resides in his own innate strength of character. The dominant leader is far more ready than the institutional leader to initiate new ideas and to take risks. It is in general true that all great captains of war have been of this type.

The third type is the persuasive leader—the man who maintains his position by virtue of his capacity to persuade and to convince his followers. This type of leader is in many ways the most interesting of the three, and in a democratic society he is certainly the most common. The dominant type of leader may hardly regard him as a leader at all, because he ~~expresses~~ expresses his followers rather than impressing them. But a leader he certainly is, and this type of leader plays an ever increasing part in modern life and especially in all non military activities. Civilian life produces him in large numbers—we all know the "understanding" man, the alert intellectual type that is good at business matters and persuasive in temperament. In the Services he tends towards the administrative side. He gets on well with his men and has an uncanny instinct for finding out what they are feeling and thinking about. His power depends upon this contact with his group and without it he is lost. Almost everything that he does within the group affects his status and in any appraisal of the quality of the leadership it is the whole man that must be considered. As Bartlett says in *Psychology and the Soldier*—"The institutional leader must remain

aloof, the dominant leader *may* remain aloof, the persuasive leader *dare* not remain aloof" In leadership of the persuasive type, force of example is a motive of supreme importance Example is so important an adjunct to leadership that it is almost justifiable to give it a category by itself

This division into categories all sounds delightfully simple but in practice no individual ever partakes solely of one type, and these three classes are merely generalisations Moreover it must be remembered that leadership is always a matter of interplay between the leader and the group that he leads Aptitude and intelligence may be innate, but the necessary skill and knowledge must be acquired With the development of modern technique, qualities of skill and knowledge become of ever growing importance, and the trend is away from the dominant and despotic type and towards the persuasive type

In general there are certain common qualities in leaders of all types, both military and civilian Whether in a politician such as Churchill or in a great Captain of war such as Wellington, or in a leader in some great humanitarian venture such as Florence Nightingale, there are at least six indispensable qualities —(1) Knowledge of the work to be done and energy wherewith to carry it out with ruthless efficiency (2) Intelligence, without which the necessary plans cannot be formulated and put into successful effect (3) Sympathy, which will alone enable the leader to retain the loyalty and allegiance of his followers (4) Confidence, wherewith to infect his followers with a belief in the success of the venture (5) Determination, which will alone overcome the difficulties inherent in any hazardous undertaking Vitality and stamina are in-

cluded under this heading. (6) A Philosophy—or better still a religion—which supplies the mainspring that is vital for success. Moral integrity and strength of character are here involved. No great leader has ever achieved outstanding success without such inspiration, though admittedly the philosophy may be a bastard faith such as that of the Nazis.

In the case of British leaders it is almost necessary to add a seventh quality namely a sense of humour, but undoubtedly certain great English and Scottish leaders—Oliver Cromwell for example—have been outstanding yet devoid of this valued lubricant. Of these essential ingredients for leadership only intelligence is innate and over and above these there are certain qualities that vary greatly with the type of leader. Thus a politician must possess skill in debate and quickness of repartee in some measure whereas these characteristics are far from necessary in the successful soldier. Obviously it would only be in the higher ranks of the angelic host that a leader would possess all these qualities in equal measure and even an archangel might be excused for some lapse in one or other particular.

In a military organisation the qualities already enumerated boil down to two essentials—

- (1) The confidence of the men in their officers superior knowledge and powers of judgment must be implicit. This is a matter of intelligence, and brain power is therefore involved.
- (2) The affection and respect of the men for their officers must be a powerful factor in their leadership. Character comes in here and it is a matter of the

heart Both these qualities involve training and time The "born-leader" does not really exist. As Sir Charles Napier tritely remarked, "A man cannot learn his profession without constant study When in a post of responsibility he has no time to read, and, if he comes to such a post with an empty skull, it is then too late to fill it "

But the leader whatever his nature must partake to some extent at least of the quality of self-confidence, to be exhibited far more in his general bearing than in any emphasis on the orders that he gives. There is a certain craving for guidance innate in the follower, and it is one of the qualities of the leader that he should exploit this in an almost unconscious manner There is nothing more infectious or more lowering to morale than indecision Initiative by the leader under difficult conditions is most important It is usually better to do something wrong than to do nothing at all

It is a mistake to imagine that the quality of leadership is rare and that it tends to atrophy under modern mass-production conditions This may be true of the outstanding leader, but in general leadership is a powerful impulse, instinctive in human nature and bobbing up in all directions in spite of every repression and denial To a greater or less extent most of us have the creative impulse and it is in the widest opportunity to fulfil this, that true happiness is to be found Many only wish to lead a contented and useful existence and are wrapped up in their own work in which they find full scope for self-development and enjoyment It is not from these that the leaders are generally found, but from those who feel the impelling force to get on in order to win recognition These are the

real leaders and in various directions according to their temperament and opportunities but it is the job of the trainer to harness this instinct to the spirit of brotherhood and to the courage, the self sacrifice and the selflessness that is evoked by the spirit of service.

Leadership is a complex quality and it appears in the most varied forms. It is this that makes it so important that the staff chosen to carry out the necessary tests in selecting a leader should possess wide knowledge and much human understanding. It is so easy for the inexperienced to mistake the thruster for the leader for a first rate leader is often well content to let another lead so long as he feels that the job is well done. A lesser man will want to take the lead under any circumstances.

Tests for leadership are numerous and varied. The well known psychological intelligence tests serve very well to start the enquiry, as intelligence is a fundamental essential in any type of leadership. Something will be said about the nature and scope of these tests in a subsequent chapter. It will be shown that they supply a very fair and simple test of innate mental capacity. Acquired knowledge is neither tested nor intended to be tested. It is most unusual for a candidate who does really badly in these to put up a good performance in the other tests so that the intelligence tests serve excellently as an initial sieve in the testing process. Moreover they are completely standard and the staff that carries out these tests can be trained in a short time. Tests of physique are only helpful to a mitigated extent as a medical examination will do much that is necessary. For the fighting services good physique and first rate general fitness as well as ample "guts" and determination are all wanted—it is the

latter qualities that are the most difficult to assess. In the German Army, tests were given which subjected the candidate to severe physical strain, but it is doubtful whether this is a real solution even for the Nazi type of leader and certainly not for British and Indian officers. Neither Wolfe nor Nelson would have been available to the British Army and the British Navy respectively if severe tests of physique had been in vogue. In military leadership in time of war some degree of ruthlessness is essential. This is a trait far more inherent in the German than in the Anglo-Saxon. In fact one of the allied aims in the second World War is to achieve a world-wide spirit of tolerance and kindness, which does not however preclude the punishment of the perpetrators of abuses with ruthless severity. The persuasive leader with no particular dominance is more and more in evidence as the civilian leader under normal conditions. One of the greatest virtues in a democratic organisation is indeed the ability to persuade others to follow. Even in the Army there is a leader at the tail of a column as well as in the van.

Methods best suited in the quest of leadership must needs vary to an almost infinite extent as they depend so much on the type of the leadership. Thus the tests to try out the type of man well suited to take the lead in the field of missionary enterprise would be very different from those suited to discern the leader in a fighting service. Individual tests—vocational and otherwise—have their place but it must always be remembered that leadership is concerned with the relations between the leader and the group and no individual test will discern this relationship. The reactions of a group to their leader vary to a surprising extent and are often quite unpredictable. For

example we all know that the ability of the schoolmaster to maintain discipline is almost instinctive in some cases and almost non-existent in others. Moreover the man of good presence and with a fine athletic record is often a poor disciplinarian, whereas an apparently meek, mild and unimpressive-looking man may keep discipline with almost effortless ease. It is of interest to any student of human behaviour to observe the reactions among the members of almost any group whether in sport, politics or any social activity such as scouting. We shall see the reaction of members of the group to the thruster their contempt for the man who tries to push himself to the front at all costs when his real leadership is slight, the quiet but forceful man who makes his personality felt with little effort, the type of man who takes part in a discussion on the lines of a tub-thumper in Hyde Park, the type of man with plenty of academic qualifications but who is colourless and devoid of drive and determination. It was a village publican who when called upon to pass judgment on a candidate for a scholastic job who was of this latter variety—with several degrees but nothing else—summed him up as follows, 'We allus find that the weakest barrels ave the most oops.'

*It must be emphasized that it is quite impossible to produce tests for leadership without considering very carefully what we are wanting to test. It has already been shown—it is hoped clearly—that leadership is not a property of relatively constant value possessed by an individual such as strength physical endurance or a knowledge of mathematics, but that it is a function not only of the person and his followers but also of the nature of the leadership. Most people in India will agree for example*

that Mr. Jinnah has shown outstanding qualities in his leadership of the Muslim Community but Mr Jinnah would certainly not be accepted as a leader of the Sikhs because he would fail to secure any co-operation from his followers in that capacity. It is indeed quite impossible to provide any sort of "manual" for the testing of leadership and it is—perhaps fortunately—a subject that cannot be acquired by the study of books, so that tests for leadership are entirely different from any kind of academic examination.

In general a good schoolmaster makes a first-rate judge of human relationships after the necessary training. His profession should make him successful in his observation of a young man's approach to specific problems and in seeing how he reacts to the remaining members of his group. The ideal judge is himself a persuasive rather than an institutional or dominant leader. The latter will find it almost impossible to carry self-effacement to the degree necessary to obtain the best results. He will also tend to be impressed by the thruster and to ignore the reactions of the group towards its individual members. It is the latter part of the job that is so vital in allowing a group to work almost unaided. It is the capacity to evoke the growth of leadership in others that constitutes one of the highest qualities. The members of a group soon find out who it is among them that approximates to this—indeed there is much to be said in favour of allowing members of a group themselves to choose their own leader. This is of course the essence of democracy and, psychologically speaking, it constitutes one of its most valuable characteristics.

It has been seen that the qualities of leadership are mainly acquired and not innate, and it is worthwhile inquiring into the atmosphere most favourable for their acquisition. There is no doubt that team games have a favourable influence on the formation of character and the development of leadership but it seems probable that less artificial pastimes involving some danger and the need for initiative and determination are even more valuable. Mountaineering, rock-climbing, and sailing are good examples of these. There is competition here but it is competition with nature and the elements. Skill at games is to some extent at least a mere matter of habit. Individual games such as tennis, billiards, and golf are far less valuable than team games but an exception may be made of boxing in the quest for military leadership since it includes to a peculiar degree hitting, movement, self-control, and tempered pugnacity qualities that are of the very essence of war. Of the group games, rugger, soccer, and rowing with their direct appeal to stamina and the instinct of assertiveness would seem most valuable in the building up of morale.

But however important games may seem in achieving that reaction to danger and the inquisitiveness that constitutes the relish for adventure we must avoid above all the attitude so common in schools and elsewhere of putting sport on a pedestal and regarding it almost as a sacred thing to which all other interests must be subordinated. We all know the type of "sportsman" who is rotten to the core in his other activities in life. Games have an important place and are never likely to be neglected in the British type of society—other countries achieve equally successful morale without their use. However lacking

the French may have been in the second European War, they put up a more than adequate performance in 1914-1918 and games have never occupied a position of much importance in their make-up

Leadership of the young might well receive a chapter by itself, and a lengthy one at that, because the adolescent has many special difficulties—complexes and conflicts as the psychologist would call them. It has been said that youth has a sentimental value in Russia, propaganda value in Germany, and only a nuisance value in England

This may have been true in the past, but youth is certainly receiving a full share of attention both in Britain and India at the present. The leader of the young is justified in cashing-in on the undoubted fact that there is nothing that young people admire quite as much as skill. We all like to feel that the man above us knows his job from top to bottom but in youth this becomes so real a matter that it often results in hero-worship. The adolescent is feeling his way in life, he or she has a great capacity for admiration and will best accept as a leader one who has expert knowledge or expert gifts in one or other direction that he or she lacks. Perhaps it is the father or mother instinct in embryo, but this hero-worship is almost a normal factor in adolescents, and it is one of the most effective means whereby they may be influenced. Moreover humour is more valued by the young than by the old but they like even less than their elders that the laugh should be turned against themselves. Sarcasm is a very lethal weapon to inflict upon youth.

In all modern fighting services a careful technique for selection of junior leaders has been evolved. In the American Army this dates from 1917 and the Germans used

modern Selection methods in a characteristically Nazi manner in building up the vast armed conglomeration that created so formidable a menace to all free countries. In Britain and in India the organization has been slow in starting but statistics confirm that far more successful results are achieved than was the case with the old technique based almost entirely on the interview. In India all three services have combined in a comprehensive organization that is gradually finding favour with even the most conservative and that in a country where democratic changes are not usually welcomed. The happy teamwork of regimental officers, psychiatrists and psychologists is there bearing successful fruit in the avoidance of frustration and the saving of training facilities. Perhaps the most unbiased and satisfactory commendation of the work of the Services Selection Boards is to be obtained from candidates for commissions themselves and even those who are unsuccessful are usually convinced of the fairness and efficiency of the technique employed.

This quest of leadership and choice of office-holders by physical, mental, and behaviour tests is indeed far from new. A notable example is described by Herodotus, that father of history who graced the 5th century B.C. with his clear and transparent style the wonderful variety of his story and the diversity of his knowledge. The incident in question was the choosing of a suitor for his daughter's hand by Cleisthenes King of Sicyon. The process took exactly one year the preliminaries including the erection of a foot-course and a wrestling ground—in fact an assault-course in modern parlance. In the words of George Rawlinson's translation (see the Penguin Herodotus Vol II) "Now when they were all come and

the day appointed had arrived, Cleisthenes first of all enquired of each concerning his country and his family, after which he kept them with him a year and made trial of their manly bearing, their temper, their accomplishments, and their dispositions, sometimes drawing them apart for converse, sometimes bringing them all together. Such as were still youths he took with him from time to time to the gymnasium, but the greatest trial of all was at the banquet table. During the whole period of their stay he lived with them as I have said, and further from first to last he entertained them sumptuously. Somehow or other the suitors who came from Athens pleased him the best of all and of these Hippoclides, Tisander's son, was specially in favour, partly on account of his manly bearing, and partly also because his ancestors were of kin to the Corinthian Cypselids." The denouement is worth recording and occurred at the final banquet on the day of the espousals, "Presently as the drinking advanced Hippoclides, who quite dumbfounded the rest, called aloud to the flute-player and bade him strike up a dance; which the man did, and Hippoclides danced to it, and he fancied that he was dancing exceedingly well, but Cleisthenes who was observing him began to misdoubt the whole business. Then Hippoclides, after a pause, told an attendant to bring in a table, and when it was brought he mounted upon it and danced first of all some Laconian figures, then some Attic ones, after which he stood on his head upon the table, and began to toss his legs about. Cleisthenes, notwithstanding that he now loathed Hippoclides for a son-in-law by reason of his dancing and his shamelessness, still as he wished to avoid an outbreak had restrained himself during the first and likewise during the second dance,

when however he saw him tossing his legs in the air, he could no longer contain himself, but cried out "Son of Tisander thou hast danced thy wife away' "What does Hippoclydes care" —was the other's answer. And hence the proverb arose." In point of fact the successful suitor turned out to be Megacles, the son of Alcmaeon, and the grandson of this union was no less a man than Pericles.

Even in the details and allowing for natural modifications this incident suggests that personnel selection procedure has made remarkably slight changes in 24 centuries.

Is it not likely that this selection technique in a modified form, which has been validated without any shadow of doubt, will continue in civilian life both in India and elsewhere under post-war conditions? Shall we remain satisfied with the old fashioned methods in which our civilian leaders were chosen by mere examination tests of acquired knowledge? Will anyone agree that these tests have produced the happiest results in the selection of officials for posts of responsibility whether in Industry or in the civil services? We all know the limitations of the scholar whose learning is not backed up and reinforced by other qualities. The modern system of testing has come to stay though it also carries with it a threat. Few men with any experience of personnel selection will agree with the dictum that a Field Marshal's baton is carried in the haversack of every private soldier. Most of us now admit that everyone should have equality of opportunity but nature plays an even greater part than nurture in the resulting product. The day will surely come when every important organisation, industrial or administrative will use modern selection methods for the recruitment of its

personnel as well as in promotion in the various grades. By such means the number of square pegs that get forced into round holes will be much reduced, and the efficiency of the organisation will be largely increased.

It has been truly said that a really great man is one who has added to the sum of human happiness or subtracted from the load of human misery. How small was Adolf Hitler in the light of this definition! It is a truism that leadership is a quality that is required in all systems of government. It is merely the external quality of the leadership that may show some variation, depending on the type of the system under which it is operating.

It has been emphasized that conceptions of democracy that include a belittlement of the leader are all wrong—indeed democracy is distinguished from other social systems in not only needing more leaders but in making far greater demands upon them. It aims at diffusing leadership throughout the various branches of social activity. The democratic leader has to rely largely on his own inherent qualities of leadership, whereas the Nazi Gauleiter and indeed the Communist Commissar, finds it far more easy to fall back on authority and the use of force. Good leadership is scarce, and especially in the higher ranks, and in a society organised for plenty leadership will be at a premium.

The essentials to world progress are justice and freedom but there is real danger that we may lose our taste for freedom by reason of our pandering to state assistance and our tolerance of bureaucratic control. The man in the street refers frequently to an alleged powerful authority, which he describes as “they”—something that will resolve

all his problems and put things right. The fault lies not so much with the people as with their leaders who have been so reluctant to lead. Few can realise that risks and responsibilities are necessary in the development of character. When leadership is in abeyance the vacuum tends to be filled by vested interests and in the Governmental sphere, by a welter of conflicting departments. It is more than a tragedy that leaders in the very front rank in the political domain have been so conspicuous by their absence. For all those wasted years between the two wars, British rulers virtually abdicated from the task of leading the people both in empire rule and in foreign affairs.

In the former a policy of drift was termed an experiment in political evolution, and in the latter the one man who challenged the policy of yielding to force was cast out into the political wilderness. It may be that this dearth of leaders was due to the gaps caused by war. The best of a whole generation had been killed or wounded—one million in killed alone of the men of the British Empire. It seems a merciful dispensation that Britain usually finds a leader of outstanding merit in times of supreme crisis, but it has been a tragedy that the leader that she has found has had to spend so many of the best years of his life in attempting in opposition, to energise the moral fibre of the people to high purpose and to effective action against the forces of tyranny that he has only been allowed to take over the helm of state when matters were in extremity and when he himself had reached an age when most men are thinking of laying down the burden of office.

Nothing is more noticeable or more characteristic of real leadership than the Prime Minister's clarion call to the British people after the evacuation from Dunkirk. Compare this with the sulky dumbness of Hitler and Mussolini after the defeats at Stalingrad and in North Africa in 1943. Of Mr Churchill the noble lines of Browning's last message to the world are exquisitely true:—

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,  
Never doubted clouds would break,  
Never dreamed though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,  
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
Sleep to wake"

## CHAPTER II

### THE TESTING OF INTELLIGENCE<sup>1</sup>

For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich. (Shakespeare)

Intelligence tests have been carried out at some schools and cognate educational establishments for many years and are widely accepted by educationists. Their value is now fully established, but it is doubtful whether their use and their limitations are fully appreciated even by school masters, and very little is known by the general public about them. It is only being realised by slow degrees that these tests are within limits, of the utmost value in choosing candidates for posts in industry and commerce as well as in the recruitment of the civilian and armed services of the Crown.

It is important that no confusion should exist between the terms innate aptitude and acquired knowledge as these are totally different characteristics, although of course bearing some relationship to each other. Tests of attainment are designed to discern and measure a student's store of acquired knowledge and are usually carried out in the normal school or academic examination. There is some doubt whether such tests on traditional lines are as efficient or as reliable as used to be thought, and reference will be made to this in a subsequent chapter. A new type of examination on objective lines for measuring

Macrae's *Talents and Temperaments* (Camb Univ Press) is a useful work for the further study of the subject matter of this chapter

achievement is now in existence and is in considerable use, particularly in the United States. It is claimed that for many purposes this kind of test is in general more satisfactory than the traditional type of written examination

Although the use of the term "intelligence" is so widespread, the answer to the question "what is intelligence?" is far from obvious and the term cannot easily be defined. In fact, definitions of this fundamental quality are about as satisfactory as those sometimes given for the equally fundamental qualities of mind and matter. What is mind? No matter. What is matter? Never mind. It is of course true that intelligence is in some degree involved in *any* mental activity, but its measurement is certainly not achieved by academic examinations. As some definition, however inadequate, is better than none, that of D. Wechsler, the American psychologist, will be given. It runs as follows —

"Intelligence is the capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment" .

Psychologists maintain that innate intelligence, i.e., the general capacity that underlies *all* our abilities, remains constant and unalterable through adult life. This is indeed no doubt true in normal circumstances when nothing unusual transpires to stimulate or inhibit it, but of course there remains the possibility of improving the power of using that intelligence, and thereby to increase the store of knowledge and experience. Indeed it is well substantiated that after the age of sixteen or thereabouts there is no increase in general intelligence in the normal

person, though acquired knowledge and such qualities as the power of judgment based on experience will certainly increase until the mind atrophies under the gradual influence of old age. The true function of intelligence is to find ways and means of achieving ends, and its work in life should be creative and possibly inventive. We can all create but we cannot all invent. The end in view may be prompted by instinct, but the business of intelligence is to find out how this end may be achieved. Every normal action has two component parts one instinctive and the other intelligence. Of these the instinctive component provides the motive, the intelligence component finds the way.

The word intelligence used in the sense that is understood in the normal intelligence tests, would perhaps be better replaced by the term *mother wit* and is a measure of the ease with which a person gets into the picture in any normal situation. The intelligent man learns more quickly and appreciates a situation more effectively than the unintelligent man. His mind is more flexible and he is therefore more trainable. Professor Spearman maintains in his "two-factor theory" that all branches of intellectual activity have one fundamental function in common together with other varying elements. This fundamental quality of general intelligence he denotes by the single letter "g". It is this general intelligence that the tests aim at measuring. There are other overlapping factors such as memory which are in general less fundamental.

The real value of intelligence tests is that they enable a prediction to be made with some accuracy as to what a man can do in the future. They make no claim to

measure such qualities as initiative, discipline or leadership or indeed education, though the educated man is likely to be more intelligent than a man whose education is slight. It will be seen therefore that high intelligence gives no criterion of leadership unless it is associated with other necessary qualities. It has been suggested indeed that intelligence can be effectively divided into three main types, (1) abstract or verbal intelligence, (2) practical intelligence involving facility in manipulating objects, and (3) social intelligence involving facility in dealing with human beings. The first type is that which is mainly concerned with the tests described below, but they are obviously inter-related.

The pioneer of intelligence testing was a French psychologist named Alfred Binet. As early as 1896 Binet expressed the hope that he would succeed in devising a series of tests which would indicate a child's grade of intelligence. This he succeeded in doing after countless experiments. It was Galton who first appreciated that mental qualities can only be judged by mental symptoms, and who realised that a graded scale was important in the measurement of mental ability. The work of Binet was in its main essentials suggested by Galton. In America, Terman, who became a Professor at Stanford University in 1910, adapted and amplified Binet's very tentative scales, and this enterprise resulted in the publication of the Stanford-Binet Tests in 1916. These tests were adapted for American children, modifications for British children being introduced by Professor Burt. These remained the standard intelligence tests for 20 years. In 1937 Terman and Merrill published a revision of the

Stanford Binet tests after ten years of work, and this extended the scale upwards as well as downwards to the 2 year old level. The value of these tests was substantiated during the first world war when they were widely and successfully used in the American Army. The majority of testers in Britain now use this new Stanford revision. Very full instructions are given for its application and the forms cover the whole range of intelligence from that of infants right up to the adult stage. In India the tests have been tried out a good deal in recent years and in several languages as regards the verbal tests. Few experts now doubt that these tests indicate with considerable accuracy the intelligence situation at the time that the tests are given. There is still some controversy as regards prognostic value, i.e. the degree to which they can predict future performance.

By testing large numbers of children of all ages, a scale of averages, technically called 'norms' has been evolved, and the "mental age" of a child can thus be discerned. The ratio  $\frac{\text{Mental Age}}{\text{Actual Age}} \times 100$  is known as the Intelligence

Quotient (I.Q.) For example a boy of 5 years of age whose mental age was 7 would have an intelligence quotient of  $\frac{7}{5} \times 100 = 140$  As a general guide in the case of children an intelligence quotient of much below 70 suggests some degree of feeble-mindedness, whereas one around or above 150 represents a state approaching brilliance. The intelligence quotient is the best single measure of intelligence, but it is by no means complete. Intelligence like personality is far too complex to be defined by a number. Individuals having the same

quotient differ widely as regards their capacity for intelligent behaviour since other factors such as persistence, emotion, and moral qualities enter into the problem, and sometimes outweigh sheer intellectual ability. The kind of life lived by an individual is itself some test of a person's intelligence. Imponderable factors enter into the classification at all levels of intelligence. But the intelligence quotient does supply a very practical and objective guide. As intelligence, as gauged by intelligence tests, ceases to increase after the age of 15 to 16 the intelligence quotient in the case of adults has no real meaning. There is, in fact, some evidence that the intelligence of adults as shown by such tests *decreases* steadily and progressively from the early thirties and these tests should therefore be treated with some suspicion as a prognostication of the intelligence of a man or woman in middle life, though still of the utmost value if adequate allowance is made for this undoubted fact.

Tests made in U.S.A. shew a slight increase of intelligence from 15 to 20 years of age followed by a steady albeit very gradual decline. It is fallacy that our physical abilities shew a greater impairment with age than do our intellectual ones. One reason for the decline is that the tests lay considerable emphasis on speed, and older people almost invariably do relatively badly on speed tests. The middle-aged resemble the British workman in having two speeds, slow and stop! We all hate to believe that we are not as mentally alert at 50 as at 20 and the elderly complain about their loss of memory but not about loss of judgment or common-sense, but memory is not the only mental capacity that declines with age nor is it even the capacity that declines the most. Incidentally the weight

of the brain decreases with age pari passu with intelligence test scores. The process is that the skull thickens and the brain shrinks assuming that the brain is the organ of the mind we should expect some concomitance between its weight and general intellectual ability. Luckily practical ability is a very different thing from mental ability. It is the success in applying intellectual capacity that really counts. Bacon summed up this matter with characteristic wisdom in the following words "Young men are fitter to invent than to judge fitter for execution than for counsel and fitter for new projects than for settled business." So the patient may be better off with the old doctor than with the young one even though the brain weight of the former has decreased some ten per cent. The older man may not react so quickly in his mental processes but if his intelligence is good he should possess the ability to learn from his own mistakes—and those of others!

It is now generally appreciated that these intelligence tests supply a far more objective standard than was possible in the days when the teacher's personal estimate of the pupil was all that was available. At the same time the personal estimate of a really effective teacher contains certain important elements that are absent from the severely objective intelligence tests—moral values for example come into the teacher's picture. The standardised test has very definite gains in its objective method of marking but this has not been done without loss since certain valuable elements such as logical sequence clarity of expression literary style and the like are lacking. Sweeping generalisations on the subject are most unwise and every teacher will agree that the career of man

children with high intelligence quotients is apt to be disappointing. It is, however, in general true that the majority of children whose intelligence quotient is over 140 grow into adults of marked ability.

Intelligence tests do not, of course, get at all abilities, and their limitations must be appreciated. Temperamental or personality factors such as the subject's interest in his work, his persistence and his zest are not directly measurable but are far from unimportant in all measures of intelligence. The tests shed little or no light on the problem which has exercised many psychologists—that of determining the relative importance of heredity as compared with environment in its influence on a person's make-up. No one should ever expect, for example, that equality in opportunity will result in equality of achievement, though this fact is not directly appreciated by many of our educational reformers. Least of all need we expect that intelligence is more than one factor—albeit an important one—in the quality of leadership. You do not get leadership from a debating society, and it is the will that dominates the intellect.

As regards the tests themselves, it is of course true that intelligence expresses itself through the medium of knowledge or skill which itself has been acquired. It follows that the tasks included in an intelligence test should be as far as possible attainable by *everyone* and as little as possible dependent on any special training. Incidentally there is little or no possibility of any coaching or cramming for an intelligence test. Even when a candidate has done the same test a second time it makes very little difference to his score provided that he has not been coached in the interval.

As language is a suitable medium, the verbal test is the most widely used, but as many persons have had less than a normal opportunity of acquiring language, non verbal tests involving pictures or diagrams offer a suitable alternative. In practice one test of each type followed by a simple reasoning test forms a very effective combination, especially in dealing with the adult, and the whole series including the marking can be carried out by a competent tester in a couple of hours. A criticism of any test involving vocabulary knowledge is that it is unfair to illiterates and to persons with foreign language handicaps. This is, of course true, but actually the size of a person's vocabulary is found to be an excellent measure of his general intelligence. The number of words a man knows seems to be at one and the same time a measure of his learning ability his fund of verbal information, and of the general range of his ideas. It is however true that the number of words acquired is influenced by educational and cultural opportunities but experience shows that schooling etc. influences the range of an individual's vocabulary much less than might be expected. Experience in U S A has proved that semi illiterates and persons of foreign extraction were penalised less by vocabulary tests than by others that were seemingly less linguistic. Tests on these lines were not only in full use in the American Army during the 1914-18 war but have been carried out by the more progressive industrial firms as well as by education authorities in Great Britain for several years.

Tests involving the use of language have been widely used in India the languages employed including Hindustani Punjabi, Marathi, Bengali and many others. Most of the group tests that involve language facilities include

analogies, spotting likes and dislikes, completing sentences, classifying, reasoning, number series, and decoding. Sample examples are appended in illustration of these —

(f) Finding the numbers that continue a series.

1, 8, 3, 7 5, 6      What two numbers come next? Answer is 7 5.

1 8 27 64      What number comes next? Answer is 125

(g) Decoding—

3 4 5 6 7 8 9 OCTNLOR 4 3 6 5 9 8 7 —————

(The answer to this is CONTROL)

The above illustrations give very simple examples and the actual tests may contain many questions that are far less obvious. Reasoning tests are on very similar lines but logical deductions are perhaps more in evidence both in words and numbers, e.g.—

July	October	Summer	—
6 2 3 1	7 5	2 1 6 3	4 —

In the former the missing word is of course Autumn in the latter the missing number is 8 so as to make the group add up to 12.

In the normal intelligence test there is a definite time allowance which is such that the brightest individual can scarcely complete the task. The problems are usually graded in difficulty. Two simple examples of reasoning tests are as follows—(1) I set out and walked southwards for 2 miles. Then I turned west and walked a mile. Then I turned north-east and walked until I struck the road on which I set out. How far was I then from the starting point?

(2) Edward Thomas, and Jack were married to Alice Edith and Theresa but not necessarily in that order. Thomas told his wife that there was an old saying

that "to change the name and not the letter, was to change for the worse and not the better"—but he expected it only referred to surnames Theresa said she hoped so, for her sister's sake What do you think is the relation of Edith to Thomas, and of Alice to Jack?

In a properly prepared test the scoring is quite objective and can be carried out by any normal individual after a little experience The tests are generally too long to be completed in the time allowed, and some of the questions are very easy whereas others are difficult This is quite deliberately planned as there is no such thing as passing or failing in an intelligence test No person has *Zero* intelligence, and certainly no one short of an archangel has unlimited intelligence The tests are intended to measure the extent of a candidate's intelligence, and no-one is expected to get full marks—otherwise he might have got higher marks had the tests been longer and more difficult.

In testing adults, "norms" or standards of comparison have been prepared as a result of many thousands of tests, and their validity is beyond all question It is quite possible to have more than one scale of "norms", thus in the testing as carried out in the British Army there is (a) the general population norm, and (b) the officer norm The former is, of course, used in testing general recruits, whereas the latter is intended as the standard of comparison wherewith to test leaders Tests made on vast numbers of people in U S A suggest—tell it not in Gath—that women have a slight but appreciable superiority over men as far as general intelligence is concerned The female of the species is not only more deadly, but also more intelligent than the male! It really cuts both ways as there is greater variation amongst the males

than among the females of a species. If there are more geniuses among the men, there are also more morons.

Norms on any particular sample are of course only valid for such groups as the sampled population represents. Thus, test on norms obtained on Englishmen should not be used for classifying Indians whose habits, ways of living and educational background differ in many respects since in the classification of intelligence it is impossible to get away altogether from the subject's past history i.e., his social, emotional, vocational and even economic adjustments. When the appropriate allowance for this has been made, there is some evidence that the intelligence of various races, whether black, yellow red or white is little different—a fact which the Herrenvolk will hardly appreciate.

It is a fair criticism that tests standardised originally on children are not so well suited for adults. Adult and juvenile intelligences are very different entities. The conception of mental age is fundamental in juveniles but this is far from the case in adult intelligence. All tests in the long run must be subjected to practical experience. It has certainly been found that the three tests, figures, verbal, and reasoning do make an efficient set for adults and fulfil adequately the requirements of an effective adult scale.

An important part of the technique of the testing of abilities is the measurement of special aptitudes. In this connection it is important to avoid confusion between the terms aptitude and ability. An ability is the power to carry out an operation whether that operation is practical or verbal. To solve a quadratic equation or to play a

violin is, for example, an ability. An ability cannot be acquired unless a certain degree of inborn capacity exists, and such inborn capacity is an *aptitude*. For vocational guidance it is obviously of the first importance that the degree of aptitude possessed by an individual in any one direction should be susceptible of accurate measurement. Common sense establishes—and here the common man is on the side of the psychological angel—that certain performances correlate very closely with each other. Take for example mechanical ability. Some people are very much better than others in manipulating mechanisms, and this ability is fairly general. Other abilities seem to bear a relationship to each other—thus mechanical ability is usually fairly closely related to arithmetical ability. In general however book-learning and “manual dexterity” are not related particularly closely, though it is altogether wrong to imagine that those who are bad at the one are likely to be good at the other. Any schoolmaster will have discovered this general relationship of abilities—that mathematical ability for example and ability for languages are aptitudes that have little or no relationship. Abilities undergo little change—it is in interests and disposition characteristics that modifications are so frequent.

Many tests have been designed—some involving much originality—in order to test special aptitudes, but in the use of these it is important to keep first principles in mind, and to realise what we are after. Just as general intelligence is certainly different from acquired knowledge, so mechanical ability is entirely different from manual dexterity. What is certain is that special aptitudes are all influenced to some extent by general intelligence. It is

these specific abilities that Spearman refers to in his two-factor theory. They involve factors other than general intelligence and their nature and range are very complex. The tests of such abilities are based on common sense—the rarest of all senses! Tests of special abilities are at present tentative and inexact but they provide useful indications of ability as well as an opportunity of observing temperament.

These tests of special aptitude are increasing rapidly and their reliability has in some cases been validated in Britain by the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, which acts as the foster mother for this special technique. The Institute also publishes a test of clerical ability which has already performed useful service. In U.S.A. tests of mechanical ability take the form of "assembling" tests, the putting together of the parts of simple mechanisms. Paper tests on similar lines are also available. The Birmingham Education Committee has also been active in a battery of tests of special aptitude in Mechanical Engineering. Tests on these lines include picture completion dominoes, construction of models from cubes and the fitting of wooden shapes into appropriate places on a board. The last two involve perception of relations of space and have some resemblance to the practical operations of industry. Their relationship to vocational guidance in industry is thus of special value. These tests have been of the utmost value in the selection of boys for junior technical schools, and they have substantiated that it is possible to predict with considerable accuracy the engineering ability of apprentices at industrial establishments. All teachers of engineering students know the type of pupil of high intelligence including mathematics,

who is incapable of mastering mechanical drawing. Tests in spatial relations discern this deficiency very quickly, and such a student should be warned against adopting engineering as a profession—particularly the mechanical branches. In some of these tests there is no time limit laid down as the score is the time taken by the candidates to complete the task. It is hardly needful to add that the lowest score represents the highest mark under these circumstances.

The capacity to do a thing quickly is itself a subject to which a good deal of attention has been devoted. It is complicated by being divided into various categories. For example, verbal speed covers such performances as reading, writing and talking, whereas rhythmic speed is involved in manipulation. We all know how much more quickly some people respond than others, but these qualities are to a great extent a matter of development through opportunity and experience. At the same time the temperament of the performer, which is no doubt largely a matter of inheritance, is also an important factor. *Anno domini* also plays its part in such tests as speed decreases with the weight of years.

It was discovered in these Birmingham tests that in general the candidates who did best in the normal intelligence tests subsequently did better on the academic side, whereas those who were more outstanding in the performance tests did better in engineering drawing and also in workshop proficiency, particularly in the most skilled trades. It was found that apprentices who did badly both in the intelligence and in the mechanical tests subsequently put up a poor performance in the Works, and frequently had to be rejected. This indicates the fallacy

of regarding engineering as a suitable subject for the fool of the family tests on these lines are eminently suitable to eliminate right from the start the ten per cent. or so of apprentices who normally turn out to be unsuitable in the average industrial establishment. It is these that cumber up the machine and cause inefficiency in a hundred ways.

Vocational experiments have been carried out in various countries, and confirm that some distinction can be made between abstract or verbal intelligence and its companion variable of mechanical or practical intelligence. These are far from independent of each other but sufficiently so to enable a separation to be made between these two types. Abilities seem to form a number of groups of 'communal clusters' which are closely inter related. No doubt such groups could be arranged by an expert into further sub-groups, but for the layman the two divisions practical and abstract, are probably sufficient.

In the tests, whether practical or verbal it is essential to interpret the score in the light of special abilities and deficiencies, interests and training and it is here that the interview is so important. The general intelligence test is of the utmost value to the vocational adviser since it is obviously important that the intelligence of an individual should be of the same order as the intelligence demanded by the occupation.

It will be generally admitted that human beings vary almost infinitely in adaptability. One man's meat is indeed another man's poison but most people can adapt themselves to a fairly wide range of occupation in accordance with their talents and temperaments. We all know for example how quickly the average man settles down to life in the Services. But adaptability must not be taken

too far. The shy and diffident type is never likely to make good in a job which demands assertive and persuasive qualities such as that of a salesman. The essential is that the occupation should provide an adequate outlet for a man's ability and interests. A man wants to feel that he is holding his own and doing useful service. The motive may be very widely different—the business man may be inclined to measure his success by his bank balance, the engineer gets his highest satisfaction in a job well done, the artist in the creation of a work of art, the evangelist in the degreee of his success in the mission field. Nor is the motive usually a single one, but it is the purpose of vocational guidance to get the adjustment between the man and the job reasonably close so as to avoid the misfits which are still so deplorably common.

Hardly anyone really knows what he wants out of life, or what he would really like to do. Much of the dissatisfaction and frustration in the lives of men and women is due to vocational maladjustment. Unemployment, next to war, is the worst curse from which mankind suffers, but unsuitable occupation runs the other two fairly closely. D. W. Harding deals with this in *The Impulse To Dominate* and stresses that deference and alleged social standing are matters that are responsible for much unhappiness in marrying men and women to work for which they are not suited.

It is obvious that youthful interests are valuable as providing clues for vocational guidance, but as adolescents are changeable and unsettled in their ideas it is a mistake to pay too much regard to these. The "Meccano" enthusiast is often far from being the budding mechanical engineer whatever the doting mother may like to think.

Psychologists have made some study of this matter and generally agree that the child's interest will be found to incline towards three main groups, and these have been labelled intellectual, practical and social.—It is noteworthy that these three groups conform closely to the three streams of modern secondary education in Britain the Grammar School, the Technical Secondary School and the Modern School. No one's interest is inclined exclusively to one of these groups—it is merely a matter of bias—but occupations may in general be married to one or another of these groups. For example the intellectual group is suited to cultural subjects, and is interested in occupations in which paper and figures are the main consideration. The banker the lawyer the insurance expert, the accountant, would be suitable occupations for this group. The practical group would include occupations in which things rather than persons are the predominant interest. Engineering farming building are three obvious activities in this group. The social group of interests embraces those who are mainly interested in advising managing and supervising other people. Careers such as those of the Services, the teacher the doctor the journalist, come under this heading. Human behaviour depends on many other factors than intelligence or even ability and such factors often exercise an overwhelming influence. We all know how much more effective "drive" is than scholarship and that it is often more valuable than learning. But with every allowance for ulterior considerations standard tests do provide a valuable guidance in occupational choices.

We all know the type of young person who is almost obsessed with some interest, but it is important to be

certain that the interest is not prompted by some emotional conflict and that it is a genuine and sustained impulse. The transport maniac is particularly common, with a craze for railway trains, aircraft or motor-cars. Adolescence is not a period when clear thinking about careers is most in evidence. Psychologists have found that there is only a moderate correlation between interest and proficiency, and the boy who is interested in flying is not necessarily the most suitable person for civil aviation or the R.I.A.F. The average juvenile has a very limited knowledge of the world, and it is only gradually being recognized how important is the work of such men as the careers-master of a school. So many young people have literally no idea of the work and responsibilities entailed in the undertaking which is intended as their life's occupation. Most boys and girls have far better opportunities for ascertaining the nature of the teaching profession than any other, yet all heads of teachers' training colleges know all too well that many prospective teachers are quite unsuited for that vocation. There is a tendency to think in terms of an occupation that is best known, and many a lad has been attracted into teaching for this reason alone. He has seen more of the schoolmaster than of a member of any other profession, and has been attracted to this career though his real inclination is elsewhere.

Experts now exist who have made a full study of vocational guidance, and the British National Institute of Industrial Psychology has for several years arranged courses on the subject. Testing and interviewing are time-consuming processes, the service of experts cannot be inexpensive, and the financial circumstances of those requiring such guidance are usually modest, so that a good

deal of this work is likely to fall on the shoulders of the teacher if he has the necessary qualifications for discharging it. No teacher can acquire the vast store of occupational information that the expert adviser needs but the National Institute recommends a seven point plan summarising under the following headings the data about each individual —

- (1) His circumstances. (financial social, etc.)
- (2) His physical characteristics. (smartness, attractiveness, disabilities, etc.)
- (3) His attainments. (work, games and leisure)
- (4) His general intelligence.
- (5) His special aptitudes. (mechanical, drawing music etc.)
- (6) His interests. (intellectual, practical and social)
- (7) His disposition. (i.e., his aptitude towards himself to others and to his work)

Such data will enable a teacher after practice to achieve a reasonable standard of competence in vocational guidance, but it is not to be expected that the necessary technique of studying occupations and individuals will be acquired all in a day. The knowledge of occupational requirements of even the best of teachers is necessarily limited nor can the knowledge of the pupil be other than imperfect and especially in the day school.

Enough has been said to indicate the value of tests and of vocational guidance, and for an appreciation of the fact that the work of a vocational adviser is by no means a sinecure. Interests that are backed by the necessary ability and disposition are to be encouraged but the vague

type of attraction towards one pursuit is often governed by "escape" or emotional conflict, and it is a genuine personality problem to marry vocational ambition to suitable vocational employment. Nor is it by any means the man at the job who is necessarily the best either at providing the necessary occupational information or in judging the qualities needed for the work. Such observations are, in fact, often about as illuminating as the disclosures by a centenarian of the secret of his longevity. Tests are of utmost value, but it is still only too true that the square peg often gets forced into the round hole for a variety of reasons.

## CHAPTER III

### THE INTERVIEW<sup>1</sup>

A perfect judge will read each word of wit  
With the same spirit that its author writ  
Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find  
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind —Pope

The interview is certainly one of the oldest methods in personnel selection. It has often been criticised by psychologists as a method of doubtful validity and reliability and, by itself it is no doubt an imperfect instrument. But in conjunction with other tests its value is considerable and undoubted, and no effective alternative is readily available. No doubt it is impossible to achieve any precise rating in an evaluation of personal traits by this means but for a subjective judgment of occupational fitness the straight forward interview must rank high in value. In particular there is no other method whereby technical and vocational qualities can be more suitably appraised when occupation records and examinational data are available.

Some years ago a survey was made in U.S.A. embracing 30 large firms employing no fewer than 55 000 people. It was then found that 21 of the firms made use of the interview alone in selecting their workers 3 of them generally used this method and the remaining 6 depended on the interview in part. Rating systems were then less

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychology of the Interview*—by Oldfield (Methuen) deals with the subject at greater length.

familiar in use with industrial organisations than in present practice, but in most cases there was little systematic attempt to co-ordinate the various interviews.

An interview for this purpose has much in common with a group situation as it involves the social interaction between two or more persons in a face-to-face situation. No person can understand any other person completely, because it is impossible for one human being to share all the thoughts and feelings of another. It is however the function of the interviewer to get as much as possible in tune with the person interviewed, in order to understand him and to weigh up his personality as intimately and as accurately as possible. For this to be achieved, the atmosphere of the interview is a matter of the highest importance, and it is vital that a sufficient degree of friendliness and mutual understanding should be established. The ability to bring about friendly relations at short notice is one of the most desirable qualities of the interviewer, and a certain amount of free conversation is in every way desirable, but it must always be remembered that the purpose of the interview is an exchange of opinions and attitudes and not a casual conversation. It is the duty of the interviewer to do everything possible to remove antagonism and suspicion, and to create a situation in which the subject feels every encouragement to speak freely and without embarrassment.

Nevertheless, it is a mistake to make this friendliness too pronounced. Most people suspect a "hail-fellow-well-met" attitude in their first meeting with a complete stranger, and the existence of a genuine barrier due to differences in age, background and the like between the two parties should be taken for granted. For this reason

it is better for the subject to sit some little distance from the interviewer, with the additional advantage that the latter can make his notes without fear of being overlooked.

Interviewing is an art which depends in the main on three factors, (1) the skill of the interviewer (2) the open ness and co-operative qualities of the person interviewed, and (3) the selection and framing of the questions that will supply the fullest, most trustworthy and most reliable information. This third factor of course involves the goal of the interview. Very different questions would naturally be asked of a candidate for a post as a professor to another who is seeking a job as a dustman, but in either case a definite plan is necessary. This plan must how ever be subject to modifications in accordance with the line of enquiry which suggests itself as the interview develops. A skilful interviewer will in fact always modify both the scope and purpose of his questions as he acquires greater insight into the personality of the individual with whom he is dealing. In general it is found that the person of high intelligence and good cultural background interviews best provided that he or she is not of a neurotic or suspicious type. For these the services of a trained psychiatrist is likely to be necessary.

In judging another person the interviewer must depend on his inference and his intuition. For the former he must be in possession of all necessary information about the upbringing and other relevant circumstances of the person interviewed. This is especially necessary in a technical or vocational interview. In such an interview the two factors to be appraised are those of technical skill and of personality. There can be little doubt that these two are inter related in a very complicated way. Indeed it

THE INTERVIEW

is doubtful whether a skilled psychologist knows much more about this complex subject than a level-headed and intelligent person who makes no claim to specific psychological knowledge. Most mental abilities are to some extent general and to some extent specific. Thus a man with artistic ability is unlikely to be equally proficient in drawing as in painting, and he may be no good at all at music. On the other hand, an artist who paints at all will have a general ability at painting whether it is a landscape or a church. This is far from suggesting that he is equally proficient in both directions. Similarly the ability to judge one's fellows is general, though one person may judge men better than women and *vice versa*. We refer to one person as being an excellent judge of character and to another as being continually taken in. Experience is a very essential quality in forming judgment and this requires a measure of maturity as the young are lacking in the store of experience which is so necessary. Every judgment partakes to some extent of previous judgments and is corrected by them. Moreover it follows from this essential factor of experience that a judge best understands a person whom he most resembles. It would be absurd for example for an Englishman to expect to understand a Chinaman when the lives of the two men are so utterly dissimilar. Intelligence and insight are the qualities that are most necessary in judgment as well as a certain detachment which enables an impartial view to be most easily attained. Over and above this the good interviewer will always take the precept of Edgar Allan Poe to heart — "To observe attentively is to remember distinctly".

Intuition exists at the very outset in our efforts to understand another person. We first consider him as a complete individual, and by native intuition the interviewer acquires his first impression. Intuition is essential not only at the outset of an interview but at every subsequent stage. Our understanding of personality comes partly from without and partly from within, and experience is essential in forming a balanced judgment. At this stage it is not unnatural to contemplate whether the proverbial intuition in women is a reality or only a myth. It can hardly be doubted that in general women are a good deal better at observing details than men and especially is this the case in external matters of dress and deportment, but it is also true of general every day observation outside the personal sphere. The social position of women may condition this and require that they should be more observant and circumspect especially in regard to the qualities of their friends and associates. Moreover women have as a rule a greater interest in the study of personality and there is little doubt that their aesthetic qualities are higher. But this very intuitive sense may form a serious bias to dispassionate judgment just as first impressions do. Few married men will contest the fact that their wives' intuition often turns out to be seriously and completely wrong. Moreover we are all liable to remember the hits and to forget the misses. That men understand men best and that women understand women best can hardly be doubted and this is merely a special case of the general principle that we understand those best whose personality is nearest to our own.

As regards the general strategy of the interview it is difficult to lay down the law or to suggest any cut and

dued procedure. In an interview for a special purpose—let us say the choosing of an assistant master at a school—some plan must necessarily be prepared, particularly as several candidates are probably being interviewed for the same appointment. But a similar routine is far from meaning a stereotyped interview, which must be above all avoided. The situation should develop in accordance with the personality of the candidate and the necessary flexibility will be thus maintained. The discussion of a topic should be continued no longer than is required for the purpose of the interview, and with some candidates it is possible to arrive at the necessary judgment much more quickly than with others. It may be argued that a standardised procedure favours comparison, but the object of the interview is not to compare the behaviour of the candidates in a standard situation as human personality is far too varied to be treated in so stereotyped a manner.

In the formation of the judgment the mental appreciation of the candidate by the interviewer is liable to be disjointed and obscured. Appearance is bound to count for a good deal, and the emphasis continually shifts from one aspect to another as the interview proceeds. A picture is being built up by degrees, and a more or less clearly formulated judgment about the candidate gradually emerges. A pen-picture of the candidate can then be recorded, if this is desirable, with appropriate use of the wealth of adjectives in which our language abounds. The comparison of a number of candidates in terms of some more or less formal rating scale is however a far more difficult matter than a mere subjective judgment.

Sometimes it is found that two interviewers get a very considerable variation in their appraisement. This may

be due to a variety of causes one of which is what is known as the "halo" effect. This is a generalised attitude regarding the individual who is being rated which modifies all judgment about him. Most people have some pet aversion or some pet inclination which is liable unduly to affect their judgment. Such an attitude of approval or disapproval towards the subject is liable to colour the whole opinion regarding his virtues and vices and its effect may be such as to make the judgment almost worthless. The effect comes into the picture in all sorts of ways as few men can completely eradicate life-long prejudices. The old school tie, politics, religion, nationality, profession, and a host of other factors affect the opinion of one man in his judgment of another. It is a mistake however to regard general impression as a bias that should be completely eliminated. There is after all a good deal in the Wykehamist motto "Manners maketh man". It may almost be agreed that bias is the very integrating factor that makes the judgment a kind of pattern possessing a definite quality though everyone will agree that certain types of bias are undesirable and dangerous. Another typical fallacy resulting in mistaken judgment is that of over simplification, and it is one that is difficult to avoid. Personality is so rich and so complicated that it is quite impossible to condense it with fairness into two or three more or less hackneyed phrases. We like to think of Nero for example as a monster of iniquity whereas he very likely possessed some endearing traits in the eyes of his best friends. It is so fatally easy to allow one outstanding impression to displace others—how often for example does not the neat, clean and healthy looking individual get judged as intelligent whereas there is little

or no correlation between these features and that of intellect

In the selection of candidates for a post in commerce or for a public service the interview must always occupy an important place. It is desirable that it should be as objective as possible but subjective factors—appearance, neatness, etc. should never be ignored. The facts regarding a candidate's education, past performances, and so on can be elicited by means of a questionnaire, and the skill of the interviewer rests in the interpretation of these facts in the light of the candidate's personality. One favourite plan in the interview is to assess the candidate in terms of ratings respecting certain traits. These might be as follows:—(1) physical appearance, (2) neatness and dress, (3) manner and bearing, (4) education, (5) experience, (6) alertness, (7) tact, (8) judgment, (9) ability to express ideas, (10) general make-up. The last item could be considered independently of the other items, and possibly weighted more heavily. The matter of this weighting is itself a very complicated one, as these qualities are of very varying value so that any marking system on numerical lines is crude and lacking in fairness. Even if the approximately correct weighting of these could be achieved, it is doubtful whether the whole person can ever be regarded as the arithmetic sum of such factors. In other words the appraisal of human personality cannot be regarded as a matter of arithmetic or as a suitable subject for objective measurement.

The value of a rating scale lies in compelling the rater to consider a whole series of qualities, after which he is in a position to sum them up. The ratings for managers in a certain firm, as drawn up by the Institute of Industrial

Psychology were as follows —Energy Appearance Adaptability, Initiative, Ambition, Honesty, Co-operativeness, Leadership and Orderliness. The five-point scale for this general impression were —Not suitable, Might succeed but doubtful, Will make an adequate manager Will be a satisfactory manager Will make an exceptionally able manager Generally speaking it is easier for judges to obtain relatively close agreement in regard to those primary qualities having a strong emotional bias excited by human relationship. Anger fear, aggressiveness, submissiveness are examples of these The less personal qualities and particularly those with a genuine moral significance such as integrity reliability punctuality loyalty to superiors and subordinates are far more difficult to estimate and judges are not so likely to agree. Even when agreement is obtained between two or more judges it is quite possible that the judges may be wrong by reason of one or other of the effects already mentioned

Another method is for the Board to consider the candidate in the light of a number of questions which could be marked + o — A series of questions that would be quite possible for the choice of personnel for a public service such as the police is as follows

- Is he physically energetic ?
- Does he possess common-sense ?
- Is he careful in his turn-out ?
- Does he show initiative and drive ?
- What sort of a voice does he have ?
- Is he keen on (a) indoor (b) outdoor exercises ?
- Is he tactful ?
- Has he a sense of humour ?

- Is he selfish and ego-centric ?
- Are his interests wide or narrow ?
- Is he the co-operative type ?
- Is he nervous and self-conscious ?
- Has he an air of sincerity ?

A total of 5 marks might well be used as a maximum for any one of these, and the number of marks awarded gives a rough guide of a candidate's suitability for the post—the assumption being made as before that these qualities are all of equal value

There is often an unconscious urge and especially in such numerical rating, to follow a centralising tendency, and this results in judgments that are mild and colourless. Mankind is on the whole of a kindly disposition in his judgments towards his fellows—the male genus perhaps more so than the female—and we tend to give the other man the benefit of the doubt. Some raters will never use the lower end of the scale at all. This leads to a levelling-up of personality and it is an error which is as serious as it is common. If an employee is only marked "below average" when he is an exceptional weakling the man who is really average suffers from being graded on a par with the moderately incompetent. Some help towards the avoidance of this tendency can be achieved by considering the candidate from the positive and negative stand-points. This will help to express the behaviour and the promise of the candidate in a very concrete way—after all, we sum people up in our daily life in a very objective way—the book of Proverbs with its wise aphorisms is the method by which the man in the street throughout the ages has summed-up what is to be desired.

in human behaviour and the lessons that it teaches will never lose their value. Thus one or two items of the work sheets might well be as follows —

He will push on with a job + o — He has no "go" about him.

He is a thoroughly responsible man + o — He could not be depended upon.

His health record appears good + o — He has frequently been off work owing to ill health.

In the interview itself a period of a few minutes of free conversation at the beginning or at the end of the interview is very desirable and a good deal of value can be obtained from it. It is sometimes desirable deliberately to challenge the ideas of the person interviewed. A type of individual altogether too common in modern life is the "Yes man" and this kind of person is a danger and a menace. No doubt the quarrelsome type is no less undesirable but it is the factor of moral courage that is all too rare nowadays and every effort should be made to give full weighting to determination and initiative.

Although it is impracticable and undesirable to conduct the questioning in an interview along stereotyped lines, the main course should be pre-determined. We have already seen that the basic qualities to be particularly observed are decided upon before the interview and such a degree of standardisation both allows one candidate to be compared with another with fairness and permits different interviewers to hold comparable interviews.

When the interviewing board consists of two or more members the member or members who are not interrogating should be far from inactive. They can always get

the utmost value in their appraisement by watching the candidate closely. The hands are particularly revealing and so are the eyes. The man who looks his interrogators straight in the face is rarely of a shifty or insincere type though the opposite should not be assumed. Much value can be obtained by asking the candidate to describe some experience or some particular job that he has undertaken. This is particularly important in a technical interview. The quality of an engineer comes out in a striking manner by his capacity to make a rough sketch and to give a cogent explanation of a job of work, and a small amount of questioning will elicit whether he is on top of his work and understands the details that really count. Further questioning of a non-technical variety should aim at discovering among other things the degree to which the candidate has shown leadership or initiative in his activities, whether athletic, social or recreational and especially in any altruistic work that evokes the spirit of service. Most men will be energetic in activities upon which their career depends, but it is only the better type that will go out of his way in service to his fellow men.

If the candidate gets worried owing to his inability to answer some of the questions that have been put to him, it is usually possible to get him back into a frame of mind which will best achieve the purpose of the interview by one or two very simple questions. It is likely moreover that some special interest may be established in the course of the interview between the two parties—some hobby or special interest or a knowledge of the candidate's home village or some common friend, and this will do much to put him at his ease. Tactfulness and courtesy are essential—the putting of awkward questions usually defeats

the very object of the interview which is to get a close contact between the two parties. A candidate for a post was once asked the cause of his father's death and this had been by judicial hanging. His reply was that his father had been taking part in a public function when the platform gave way!

Assessment of character and personality based on an interview alone must obviously be largely intuitive but it is possible with care and skill to widen and systematise the objective evidence—sometimes very slender—upon which the judgments are based. An interview technique will never be as satisfactory as a technique based on a framework of inter personal relations using leaderless groups, in which the individuals under test have acquired some knowledge of each other. It is only by this means that the observer obtains certain aspects of the candidates which assist in building up a final integrated judgment. In a 20 minutes interview it is difficult to get far below the superficial personality of the candidate over a wide range unless the interviewer has really exceptional gifts. There is reason to think however that in not less than seventy five per cent. of cases a skilful interviewer will arrive at approximately the same results in his appraisal as is obtained by a fully co-ordinated system of personnel testing. If there is also added a couple of intelligence tests as well, this percentage is possibly even higher. It is the odd twenty five per cent. or thereabouts who hoodwink the interviewer to their own advantage or disadvantage that justify the time and money necessary for the more modern technique and this undoubted fact is becoming more and more widely appreciated and in very varied directions.

The psychiatric interview aims at revealing the deepest factors underlying human personality. Every encouragement is given to the disclosure of thoughts and emotions whether trivial or otherwise. Relations with others, family history and the like, all supply valued data and so do artistic, literary and recreational tastes and interests. Prejudices are particularly revealing. Emotional difficulties are at the bottom of most conflicts in human relations—the submissiveness that produces the "can't" outlook and the rebel and escapist whose reaction is "shan't". Factors of upbringing have so much responsibility in the make-up of a man or a woman, and so, to a lesser extent, has the general trend of affairs. Safety-first was so much in vogue in the years between the two wars, and the security-monger was rampant. The spirit of adventure was discouraged even in those creative, determined, and individualistic youths to whom it would have been as the breath of their nostrils. The interpretation of a psychiatric interview is largely a matter of the treatment of subjective factors in an objective way and art as well as science is required in the expert psychiatrist.

In the general interview it is the candidate's *attitude* that provides the essential basis for the judgment. It is the perception of attitude by means of conversation, rather than the exchange of information and ideas, that provides the judgment of personal qualities. In other words it is not so much what the candidate says as his attitude in saying it that really counts, so that it is the task of the interviewer to cause the candidate to display attitudes that are not foreign to his normal personality, he has in fact to stimulate this attitude in order to form a reliable judgment. Subtleties of verbal expression merely play their

part in this by securing that release of restraint that is so desirable. This is where the skill of the interviewer comes in, and this skill is largely intuitive. Scientific method hardly enters into it. The main purpose of the interviewer is to break through any superficial behaviour of the candidate in an attempt to arrive at more basic qualities.

In regard to the material setting of the interview every thing should be done to mitigate what must necessarily be an ordeal. The waiting room should be reasonably comfortable and a prolonged delay should be as far as possible avoided. The typical dentist's waiting room with its array of stale Punches is not the ideal. Lavatory facilities should be available and if women candidates are to be seen, a mirror is of particular use. If a series of candidates are to be interviewed it is best to avoid a return of the candidates to the waiting room as post mortems are undesirable. Interruptions in the interview must be avoided—there is nothing more maddening than a telephone call to the interviewer just when the conversation has reached an intimate stage. Friendliness is essential but "heartiness" is to be avoided—likewise criticism, disapproval, or even approval. Any stilted mechanical cordiality defeats its own end. The tenor of the interview is often set by the candidate himself and an introspective habit of mind must be cultivated by the interviewer in his attempt to become skilful in the conduct of human relations. It is the interview as a whole that counts in the object of achieving a definite purpose. Without this the affair becomes a series of disjointed observations, and the whole operation will be inconclusive. Judgment should be as objective as possible—mere impressions are rarely

devoid of bias. Simple language is by far the best medium to employ as a florid or stilted phraseology merely puts the candidate off. Psychological expressions must be above all avoided.

So much then for the general principles of the interview, but much of what has been written is to some extent academic and doctrinaire and more detail is desirable. It has been emphasized that every interviewer must develop his own idiom and his own technique; nevertheless a plan must always be prepared in the first instance. A plan suitable for the interview of a candidate for a public appointment is given below, the subject having previously filled in a questionnaire giving full details of his previous upbringing, his education, appointments held and so on. An appropriate field of enquiry might then be as follows —

1 *Reason for the application* i.e., Self-betterment, financial, love of the work etc. The interviewee should regard it as natural for a person to look after his own interests but it is surely justifiable to give special credit if there is evidence of altruism in the motives that have led to the application.

2 *Educational* Particularly in the case of a young man who has not long left his school or university some enquiry is desirable into such matters as —

Attitude to the school and to fellow students

Attitude to the masters

Attitude to games and to communal activities

Signs of leadership e.g. was he a prefect, captain of a team etc?

Signs of initiative, independence and enthusiasm in his school life

## 3 Post School Employment

Nature of responsibility attained.

Experience in the control of men.

Attitude to superiors equals and subordinates.

Sense of justice to others.

Reasons for any unusual changes of employment.

## 4. Interests and hobbies

Are they indoors or outdoors ?

Are they solitary or social ?

Are they casual and dilettante or persistent ?

Are they intellectual and aesthetic and/or physical and practical ?

Is there evidence of leadership or a sense of responsibility ?

Has he acquired a high or low level of attainment ?

What degree and type of reading is practised ?

## 5 Aims and Ambitions

Are they selfish or socially directed ?

Are they vague or definite ?

What degree of enterprise has been used in their attainment ?

## 6. Citizenship activities

What range of interests ?

What degree of enthusiasm and of knowledge ?

Has he an idealistic or materialistic outlook on life ?

## 7 Technical activities

In the case of a technical interview the enquiry is likely to follow some line of approach such as the following —

Recognized qualifications e.g. degrees and diplomas ?

Degree of enthusiasm and interest

Practical knowledge and experience.

Breadth of outlook on technical matters

Does he realise the need to acquire further knowledge and experience ?

Such an enquiry could be expanded almost indefinitely and it will be noticed that there is no delving into private or family affairs and no examination of social status. The former in particular is a subject more suited to a psychiatrist. It is, moreover, important in the interrogation that the approach should be oblique rather than direct. Leading questions should in general be avoided. It is unwise for example to ask a candidate for a scholastic post such a question as 'I expect you like teaching don't you ?' An enquiry into the teaching methods that he regards as most successful will be far more productive of results. A good interviewer has been described as a man who would refrain from saying "speak up" but would remark "I'm a little deaf". It is above all important that an interviewer should put himself in a very real way into the position of the person interviewed in order to appreciate his point of view. Sympathy and patience are the qualities that are most wanted for this and they are those that pay the highest dividend in attaining successful results. The candidate's sincerity and his integrity come out in all sorts of ways—sometimes for example in the degree to which his own account of himself tallies with the facts given in the questionnaire. Indeed no good interviewer will be content to accept at its face value the interviewer's own account of circumstances and events, inasmuch as most people tend to give answers in a form that is beneficial to

themselves. It is in the interpretation of the information in the light of a person's attitude that the interviewer shows his skill—not merely the words and phrases but the facial expression, tone of voice gesture and so on. An evasive attitude towards a topic often provides a useful pointer. It is in a man's attitude towards a subject that is of the highest interest to himself that his real personality is best displayed.

As already emphasized, the interview must never be a cut and dried affair. It involves the personality of the interviewer as well as that of the person interviewed and personality is far too rich a quality to allow of any hackneyed or stereotyped procedure. There are however certain points of the "Do and Don't" variety that will be admitted by all interviewers as the basis for their technique and to close the chapter some ten of these are appended —

- 1 Ensure a friendly and courteous reception with adequate conveniences and the avoidance of unnecessary waiting
- 2 Plan the interview beforehand but never let it degenerate into a set of stilted and stereotyped questions.
- 3 Begin the interview on a pleasant note. Some small talk on a general topic may not be amiss before the subject matter of the interview proper begins.
- 4 Be friendly, tolerant and kindly but avoid over heartiness.
- 5 Remember throughout that it takes two to make an interview and without the co-operation of the person interviewed the whole affair is bound to be a failure.

- 6 Use simple everyday language with the avoidance of clichés and jargon
- 7 Remember that the skilful interviewer contrives to make the person interviewed do most of the talking and that a pleasant manner and sympathetic understanding contributes most to this
- 8 Avoid criticism or disapproval, or if such is necessary it can be given in an indirect manner which will avoid offence
9. Remember that it is the general manner of the interviewee and the attitude adopted that is often of more importance in the appraisement of personality than the actual trend of the conversation
10. End the interview on a pleasant note and with the avoidance of abruptness A successful interview is one that satisfies the person interviewed as well as the interviewer himself

Interviewing in an efficient and dynamic manner is exhausting work, and long hours are to be deprecated. It was the writer's duty to interview continuously for 8 hours a day for 5 days a week for several months and without the week-end break the efficiency of the work would have fallen off considerably. The candidate is the first to notice when the interviewer is jaded and fatigued, vital points may be missed, attention may lapse, and promising lines of conversation get overlooked.

Assessment of personality traits by interview technique is far from ideal but it will always play an important part in the quest of leadership. Waste of all kind must be avoided in our post-war economy, and above all waste in

human material where the losses have been so considerable. It involves short-comings and frustration in every direction and is as serious as it is inexcusable. Selection of personnel even by organisations that are in other respects up to date and efficient is often both crude and ineffective. It may be that a great improvement in selection technique will turn out to be one of the minor advantages to offset against the vast material and moral damage that the second world war has inflicted on civilization.

## CHAPTER IV

### PERSONALITY<sup>1</sup>

The tree of knowledge is not that of life

—Byron

Personality is one of the most abstract words in our language and in French it is yet more so when it may even mean nobody. The word "persona" originally referred to the mask used by the players in Greek drama, and later on it was used as an *assemblage of personal qualities*. In law it refers to the *living human being in his entirety*. In general it can perhaps be best defined as *what a man really is*. The classical theory ascribed peculiarities of temperament and personality to the humours in the body, modern biochemical knowledge of the regulating power of the glands suggests that after all the ancient doctrine in this respect was not so far wrong. Biochemistry claims for example that temperament, behaviour and personality—in fact all the mental characteristics—depend in many ways on the genes, which are stated to enter into the production of every cell in the body. It is undoubtedly that heredity affects the traits of personality, but this is far from suggesting that personal characteristics are determined solely or even mainly by the genes.

Much controversy has always existed as to the degree to which physique, temperament, mentality—in fact all the

<sup>1</sup> Those who wish to pursue the study a good deal more fully may well peruse *Personality* by Prof Gordon W Allport (Constable)

qualities that are involved in personality—are influenced by heredity and how much by environment. Whereas no feature of personality is devoid of hereditary influences the influences of environment are also considerable. Personality is in fact a function of heredity and environment, but the degree of complexity of this function is never likely to be mathematically determined. For the practical man environment is the most important feature since its moulding influence is capable of application, whereas we cannot influence the operation of heredity in any given case. At the same time inheritance and particularly the inheritance of ability is a very striking matter and it has been stated with every likelihood of truth that Nature is more important than Nurture. Professor Pearson has even concluded that the influence of environment is not one-fifth that of heredity. Feeble-mindedness follows simple Mendelian rules and cannot be bred out of a family in which it is well established. Some diseases haemophilia for example while strongly inherited remain latent in one sex in this case in females. The whole future individual complete with tendencies to longevity and fertility his mental and physical characteristics all seem to be already established from the instant of the fecundation of the single germ cell. Scholarship seems to be inherited more strongly than most traits—such names as Sedgwick, Thompson, Darwin and Butler speak for themselves. But we inherit tendencies temperaments and dispositions rather than actual virtues and vices and a man's destiny is in his own hands. As Tennyson puts it—

"And sometimes in a dead man's face  
To those that watch it more and more

A likeness hardly seen before  
Comes out to someone of his race"

It is tempting in any enquiry on the personality of the leader to wonder to what extent it is possible for the leader to be bred—whether the superman can be developed on eugenic lines Mendel and Galton, (cousin of Darwin) who were both born in 1822, were the pioneers of the study of heredity, albeit in widely different directions Since their time there has been a vast increase in scientific knowledge of the mechanism of reproduction It seems certain that both physical and mental characteristics in man are inherited on Mendelian lines Idiosyncrasies are passed on in a way that is sometimes positively startling and any insurance company, knows the degree to which twins run in families We cannot, at present at any rate, modify or control the genes thus enabling us to remove the tendency to—let us say—cleft palate, or squint or stammering from the hereditary make-up of a child The most hopeful scientific approach to such control would seem to be by the action of a chemical or of a physical stimulus such as X rays In this way human nature might be definitely altered and the prospect is perhaps startling' In any case it seems likely that some alteration in the genes does take place spontaneously But the best way of combining in one individual an array of desirable attributes is by suitable mating and this is what applied eugenics attempts to do Certainly we are not at present making the most of the human material available or using the knowledge that science gives us We pay too much attention to the economic and not enough to the biological aspect of life

Anyhow to the normal person the most interesting topic is mankind, and to all of us, one at least of the most interesting of all mankind is oneself. Men and women—the latter even more than the former—spend a good deal of their time in discussing their fellows and such conversation partakes to some degree of the nature of a judgment, though the appraisement or the reverse is usually incomplete, partial, and often highly coloured. Happiness and contentment—for older people serenity is perhaps a more embracing term—are achievements and not lucky accidents.

It is hardly possible adequately to sum up the qualities that constitute personality, but an appraisement of their relative importance can be made and their comparative value attested. This evaluation and arranging constitutes the art of being a person and possessing individuality which is the outstanding characteristic of man. Personality is very much a reality and includes a mass of components of which the human body is a part as well as the human mind. In studying personality it is important not to neglect the importance of the physical side. It is all very well to quote Napoleon and to appraise morale as so much higher than the physical, but as soon as the body becomes inefficient it becomes at once a prominent part of personality. It is owing to this interdependence of the mind and the body that psychiatry is a more satisfactory cult than mere psychology. Medical science appreciates that our whole physical and indeed mental make-up is conditioned by the endocrine glands of which the pituitary no greater than a pea is probably predominant.

Personality includes skills and abilities, ambitions, ideals and fears. It also includes memories and these are

unique in personality in that they are incapable of being shared. Memory is indeed one of the most baffling traits and possesses a bridgelike character reaching backwards as a link with by-gone experience. Luckily for the average man the art of being a person is based upon the solution of severely practical rather than philosophic problems. There is very little of genuine science in the study of the individual, for science deals with classes and categories and when the class arrives the individual disappears.

In contrast to *intelligence* a powerful urge is provided, whether in man or animals, by *instinct*. There is a tendency for all useful actions that are obviously not intelligent to be dumped into this category. Thus the partridge nests on the ground and not in a tree although the latter position would be a better protection against its many enemies. The time honoured categories of instincts are "parental", "reproductive", "self-preserved" and so on, but there is no evidence that such featureless entities provide an explanation of such actions. Consider the common British eel for example which starts its earthly life in a breeding ground in deep water some 2,000 miles away in the West Atlantic, when only a few inches long, it crosses the Atlantic, taking some 3 years on the journey. Developing a fresh-water propensity it swims up the rivers, growing in size over a period of many years. One day and for no apparent reason, it starts on its lengthy journey back, only falling in love with the lady-eel on completion of its journey. Here, having given birth to an incredibly large number of offsprings, both parents end what is certainly not a brief nor uneventful history. The reproductive instinct is one thing, trekking across a wide

ocean with no love-making en route is another, and as it is necessary to postulate something to replace the missing intelligence let us call it "blind instinct". In the case of man, instinct is even more developed than in the animal. Instinct may do the right thing without knowing why. Man, however, possesses the power of trampling on his own instincts and often does so. This is the real meaning of free-will and its agencies are intelligence and human personality. Instinct leads to action but instinctive action can be and is modified by intelligence. A man's instinct in battle may be to run away but he is restrained by his intelligence—often a more potent influence than fear of the consequences.

Personality measurement is neither simple nor exact but from a practical and common sense standpoint it seems possible to reduce a vast array of alleged personality traits to a relatively few components. The innate individual equipment is really three-fold, involving physique, temperament and intelligence and the part played by these three in the endowment of personality is no doubt highly complex. Temperament includes emotional qualities, for emotion as well as intelligence plays a large part in determining behaviour. In popular language one or other—the heart or the head—dominates in the make-up of an individual. It is hardly possible to measure emotion in a way that intelligence can be gauged but its influence is none the less considerable and sometimes overwhelming. Ambitions, ideals, loyalties and many other factors are the constituents of personality. Alexander without his dreams of world domination, Newton without curiosity, Columbus without the urge for exploration, Abraham

Lincoln without sympathy and compassion, all these might have been very ordinary men

Personality in the highest form is best described as genius, the quality in men like Plato, Michael Angelo, Shakespeare, possibly Lenin Originality is the essence of such quality—the creative instinct Much of the teaching of the late Monsieur Coué was no doubt basically correct Few of us can now appreciate the extent of the influence that our thoughts have upon our health Much of our happiness and indeed of our misery can be traced to our thoughts Shakespeare was no mean psychologist in his appreciation of the importance of self-suggestion.—

"Raze out the written troubles of the brain  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote, -  
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff,  
Which weighs upon the heart"

Intelligence is a factor in personality of the first importance, but there are others that carry even greater weight We all know the highly intelligent type who is colourless to a degree Moreover the highly intelligent man may be lazy or anti-social or lacking in a hundred ways the qualities necessary to make his life a success It is unfortunately true that intelligence does not necessarily include the ability to think coherently Coherent thought is a way of using intelligence which is only achieved by long and patient education of the mind This habit of logical thought is of supreme importance in those who lead and influence public opinion The Nazi and Fascist systems were brought into being by the exploitation of the many by the few

with him, and that he judges those worst whom he least resembles. It is the quality called empathy that comes in here, i.e., the tendency to enter into the other man's problems and even to imitate him. In cases where a man is judging another whom he closely resembles it is above all necessary to guard against the "Halo" effect.

In connection with the appraisement of personality some investigation is necessary as to the value of phrenology palmistry character reading hand writing and cognate practices. Throughout the ages these have ranked high in human interest, but there has been no genuine scientific background and any success has been mainly a matter of shrewd observation coupled with dogmatic assertion. In fact these practices and that of spiritualism in even greater measure have been a lucrative racket for tricksters and charlatans. The art of evaluating personality from the outward expression is called physiognomy and was a favourite pastime among ancient philosophers. So many were its abuses however that in the reign of George II an Act of Parliament was enacted deeming all persons pretending to have skill in physiognomy rogues and vagabonds. The penalty for these practices was a public whipping or a sojourn in the house of correction.

Coming to recent times, the subject of Physiognomy received considerable scientific backing in the writings of the German psychiatrist Ernst Kretschmer whose work *Physique and Character* was published in 1921. This book caused a flood of criticism in psychological circles and many of his contentions have been rejected by the general consensus of opinion. At the same time since mind and body are so intimately related it is not altogether un-

reasonable to hope that the variables that account for the limitless variety of human personality may some day be discovered.

John Stuart Mill always asserted that the creation of a new science, the science of character and called by him Ethology, was practicable, but this new science as enunciated by him was little more than a series of maxims and dogmatic assertions. Mill repudiated the experimental method as unsuited for the study of personality, and it was Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911) who was the pioneer of experimentation in the field of behaviour, and who first employed statistics in connection with the rating of human qualities. Since his time and in spite of two world wars the methods and technique of this field of study have been remarkably expanded, and there can be little doubt that experiments on these lines will elucidate much more about the nature of personality than is known at present.

Danger, hardship, and insecurity are circumstances under which personality thrives. The widespread hankering after safety first conditions bodes ill for the future of the British and the Indian races. There is nothing so deadening to the development of the human personality as security and promotion by seniority. Generalisation is easy and often unfair, but the circumstances of the Japanese incursion into Malaya suggested that our colonies are ceasing to attract the adventurous young. With the arrival of the white woman with her "Frigidaires" and household comforts British colonists tend to recreate Surbiton conditions in the tropics, and the old hardy pioneer spirit vanishes.

Forcefulness and mental energy are qualities of much value in personality, and it is the absence of these that ex-

plains the mediocrity of so many men and women. A man may be highly educated and a clear thinker but lacking force he is not attractive. The dull person often lacks the degree of egotism that would make him interesting. The man of arresting personality is usually interested both in people and in things and his enthusiasm is infectious. His mind is kept warm by sympathy and cheerfulness and he follows the principle enunciated by Browning —

"It's wiser being good than bad  
It's safer being meek than fierce  
It's fitter being sane than mad  
My own hope is a sun will pierce  
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched"

In the study of personality many methods are available and it would be entirely a mistake to claim any one of them as of special importance in a subject which is after all the particular preserve of the psychologist and the psychiatrist. One simple method of diagnosis is a standardised questionnaire another is a word-association test. In the former the subject selects replies to various alternatives in a set of questions and thereby demonstrates the behaviour most characteristic of himself. Much value is obtained from this if replies are given truthfully and honestly which is usually but by no means always the case. In the word association test the subject writes in a few seconds what flashes through his mind when a key word is displayed. The mental stimulus is sudden and there is little or no time for dissimulation even if this is attempted and the characteristic features—often inhibited—of the subject's life are displayed and very often in a remarkable manner. Picture stories in which the subject gives his interpretation of a picture sometimes of

a vivid or harrowing nature, is another means whereby this object can be obtained. Such personality pointers provide a rough assessment of deeper personality factors and are of the utmost value in psychological analysis. Experience confirms that such assessment is often of considerable accuracy.

It will be generally admitted by psychologists that methods for the testing of personality are in a much more primitive state than those used in the testing of intelligence. The latter have been experimented with by a whole army of research workers ever since Binet's classical researches some forty years ago. For personality assessment the tendency has been in the main to depend on the interview by an expert psychologist. It may indeed be claimed with a good deal of truth that the projection technique that is of considerable use in the British and in the Indian Army represents the first serious attempt to solve the problem of testing for personality on a group basis. This technique has certainly been far more successful than the experiments on questionnaire lines that are favoured by American psychologists, though this is not to deny that questionnaires have their uses. The questionnaire is in general not beloved by the average Briton owing to his feeling that it partakes too much of the methods of 'Nosey Parker'.

It was the famous psychiatrist Jung who first developed the so-called Projection technique. The object is to get at the emotions that are of the greatest significance in a person's basic make-up and thus to take soundings of different aspects of his personality. Experience shows that these tests do display personality to a remarkable extent and show up the underlying emotions that govern the life

plains the mediocrity of so many men and women. A man may be highly educated and a clear thinker but lacking force he is not attractive. The dull person often lacks the degree of egotism that would make him interesting. The man of arresting personality is usually interested both in people and in things and his enthusiasm is infectious. His mind is kept warm by sympathy and cheerfulness and he follows the principle enunciated by Browning —

"It's wiser being good than bad  
It's safer being meek than fierce  
It's fitter being sane than mad  
My own hope is a sun will pierce  
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched"

In the study of personality many methods are available, and it would be entirely a mistake to claim any one of them as of special importance in a subject which is after all the particular preserve of the psychologist and the psychiatrist. One simple method of diagnosis is a standardised questionnaire another is a word-association test. In the former the subject selects replies to various alternatives in a set of questions and thereby demonstrates the behaviour most characteristic of himself. Much value is obtained from this if replies are given truthfully and honestly which is usually but by no means always the case. In the word association test the subject writes in a few seconds what flashes through his mind when a key word is displayed. The mental stimulus is sudden and there is little or no time for dissimulation even if this is attempted and the characteristic features—often inhibited—of the subject's life are displayed and very often in a remarkable manner. Picture stories in which the subject gives his interpretation of a picture sometimes of

a vivid or harrowing nature, is another means whereby this object can be obtained. Such personality pointers provide a rough assessment of deeper personality factors and are of the utmost value in psychological analysis. Experience confirms that such assessment is often of considerable accuracy.

It will be generally admitted by psychologists that methods for the testing of personality are in a much more primitive state than those used in the testing of intelligence. The latter have been experimented with by a whole army of research workers ever since Binet's classical researches some forty years ago. For personality assessment the tendency has been in the main to depend on the interview by an expert psychologist. It may indeed be claimed with a good deal of truth that the projection technique that is of considerable use in the British and in the Indian Army represents the first serious attempt to solve the problem of testing for personality on a group basis. This technique has certainly been far more successful than the experiments on questionnaire lines that are favoured by American psychologists, though this is not to deny that questionnaires have their uses. The questionnaire is in general not beloved by the average Briton owing to his feeling that it partakes too much of the methods of 'Nosey Parker'.

It was the famous psychiatrist Jung who first developed the so-called Projection technique. The object is to get at the emotions that are of the greatest significance in a person's basic make-up and thus to take soundings of different aspects of his personality. Experience shows that these tests do display personality to a remarkable extent and show up the underlying emotions that govern the life

of the person tested. We are all controlled by our emotional background which has of course been materially modified as a result of various associations, in which the home and the school play the dominant factors, the former far more than the latter. In later life sexual and conjugal factors naturally have an important part. Was it not Talleyrand, at least as great an expert in conjugal as in political affairs, who coined the definition 'L'amour est une réalité dans le domaine de l'imagination'?"

To what extent various cultural modes of living have an influence in modifying personality is a matter of the utmost importance particularly is this the case in considering the difference between two widely divergent civilizations such as that of India and of Britain. There must be room here for considerable research by expert psychologists in an attempt to discover to what extent social customs such as the caste system family choice of the bride the doctrine of Karma the relative lack of a sense of humour and the like—to name only a few of the characteristic features of the Indian way of living—play their part in modifying personality make-up as compared with the influence of European social family customs. Certainly the degree of dependence on parents and obedience to family dictates features so much more noticeable in the Indian than in the Westerner induce a lack of initiative a tendency to rely on others for guidance and a self-centred social outlook.

Graphology i.e. the analysis of handwriting is another possibility. It is argued that hand writing is after all "brain writing" but the subject is not only very much in its infancy but it is entirely a matter for experts and these are few and far between. In any case the diagnostic value

is open to considerable doubt. There are also a large number of possible tests, and in U.S.A. in particular the experimentation has been considerable and has produced promising results. It is indeed not at all difficult to devise tests to observe the capacity for leadership in a standardised situation which are both novel and lifelike. Two or three trained "stooges" are required and a certain amount of rough equipment—the erection of a small bridge or the construction of a small shelter, or even the pitching of a tent gives ample scope for testing a man's ability to overcome simple and practical obstacles. Mechanical apparatus has also been devised to measure how quickly and efficiently a man can figure out and perform relatively simple mechanical tasks—sometimes when bombarded by disturbing stimuli such as weird and unpleasant noises. Tasks involving the following out of directions in performance of lines and patterns such as those on a spot-dating machine is another possibility, with pre-arranged frustrations and difficulties calling for quickness of decision, resourcefulness, patience, persistence, planning capacity, and capacity to learn by mistakes—all traits that are necessary in the exercise of leadership. Tests for measurement of an individual's fear of physical pain and his control of functions and tenacity in the face of such threats were said to be in vogue in the selection of candidates for commissions in the German Army, but it is doubtful whether such tests serve any useful purpose.

Most soldiers will appreciate that the acid test in combatant leadership is performance under fire, and even at that the same man may be a hero on one occasion and a coward at another time. It is often the highly-strung and apparently nervous man who is most efficient when a

critical situation arises. The appraisement of the worth of a candidate for leadership in a military organisation is more difficult than in any other—adaptability to persons is wanted as well as adaptability to concrete problems. It involves group morale which links each individual with the leader as well as an intimate knowledge of the profession of arms in one of its many branches. In war the fighting leader has often to carry on under severe stress and with little respite. What is basic in personality is generally spontaneous and this provides the key to the most effective test procedure. No-one can understand another person completely—all that we can hope for is to understand the other man relatively well and it is a matter of practical importance to devise the best means of doing so. First impressions may often be faulty but what has significance is the amazing richness of the most fleeting of acquaintanceships, particularly the tell tale nature of brief conversations as well as appearance, gesture and manner of speaking. It is only too true that some people rarely open their mouth without putting their foot in it!

Hands, posture, the eyes and gestures show up in the shortest of interviews. The bias occasioned by instinctive likes or dislikes is bound to exercise an effect and it is for the level headed judge to see that these are not allowed to have too much influence. It generally happens that a substantial residuum of valid judgment survives a first impression. Mannerisms are of considerable importance. The writer knew a young officer in the first world war who was appointed to a technical job which involved life with a small staff in cooped up dug-out accommodation. Despite undoubted technical efficiency, he only held down the job for one month. His main offences were two in

number, the first was spearing the butter with a jammy knife, the second was blowing down the spout of the tea-pot to remove obstructions!

It is surprising how informative the shortest of interviews can be in the case of experts at the game, but they would be the last to pretend that a snap prediction of this order can be regarded as reliable. Experience shows for example that some of the most efficient men at their job will create very poor first impressions.

It is sufficient for the layman at any rate to appreciate that the avenues of approach to the study of personality are numerous and far-reaching. There is certainly no single method of appraisement and there is a good deal of danger in attempting to bring to bear on the subject a small amount of doctrinaire knowledge of psychology. In this respect, as in many others, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Personality is a complex entity and every individual is unique. In descriptions of a person it is not possible, or indeed desirable to avoid enumeration of qualities, but the whole personality is more complex than this, and that is where the psychologist comes in. Human instincts are an ancestral legacy, and temperament to a large extent at least is the sum of such instincts, and in most of us one or more of these instincts is very much in evidence. Thus one man may have a powerful instinct for combat and is of a pugnacious temperament, another is more than fond of the good things of life and is of a Sybaritic temperament. The man to be envied is the well-balanced personality with whom no instinct is too great or too small. We are all justified in interesting ourselves in psychology as indeed in medical science, or in any other branch of learning, but the actual

practice must be left to the expert who is the last to make extravagant claims in support of any particular method of attack. Psychologists themselves make no special claim to be superior judges of personality by virtue of their expert knowledge though in point of fact they usually exercise particular skill in this respect by virtue of their experience. William Wundt, the founder of experimental psychology in Germany himself laid down that there are no psychological laws to which the exceptions are not more numerous than the agreements and it is just the individuality of the person that upsets the experimenter's abstractions.

It is the duty of all men to cultivate their own personality and this can be best accomplished under free conditions in an ordered society built up by a high sense of duty among its members. "Without vision the people perish" wrote the author of Proverbs some 3,000 years ago and this is as true now as ever. A psychological fact that is much neglected to-day is that love, devotion, loyalty—in truth everything that makes up one's duty to one's neighbour—is developed not by rewards offered but by demands made on these qualities. We are only dimly realising that the cure for war is contained in a conception of a neighbour as world wide and not limited to the sovereign state or even Commonwealth. Dr Wickham Steed in a monograph on *Personality and War* written some years before the second world conflagration summed up this conception as follows—"There are innumerable outlets for personality including the strongest and most masterful, in this immense task of turning the minds of men away from the adventure of spoiling their human inheritance and towards the greater adventure of develop-

ing it—We shall overcome war when we begin to fit ourselves for the great adventure of peace, an adventure thrilling enough since it must imply a radical transformation of social structures, and the transmutation of political and economic "values", a change in the standards of honour—personal, national, and international—a complete revolution, in short, save in the sense that men need never change the highest conception of human worth, that of supreme ability unselfishly to serve their fellow men. The chief outlet of personality in a world beyond war will be found in its dedication to human service, in fitness to serve, and in readiness to face whatever risks such service may entail".

After all, the activity of a leader in any of the countless varieties of human effort is far more than the carrying out of a job. It is the effective behaviour of the man that counts, and that is a product of his total personality. The old conception of the mind as being built up of various faculties, and personality as being the arithmetic sum of a number of qualities is no longer tenable. Every individual is unique and possesses his own idiom which is teeming with individual tendencies, and whereas some of these qualities are relatively permanent others are very definitely the product of training. It is impossible to avoid describing an individual in terms of separate qualities, but the true worth or lack of worth of a man is not arrived at by a mere enumeration of qualities. The qualities that constitute morale are in many cases the ones that count most and these are both elusive and subjective.

Behind the activities of a strong personality there is present a certain quality of mind out of which action arises, and by which it is sustained. Such men and

women are to be found in very varied activities in Church and State where their presence is an inspiration to those with whom they come into contact. They serve as a lubricant, and when they are present things run smoothly when they are absent things go wrong. It is what they are rather than what they do that really counts, and unselfishness and quiet confidence are the qualities that are likely to be in evidence in such cases. It is not given to everyone to attain such qualities, and a strong self-sufficing personality must be anchored to something stronger and deeper than self.

Personality is indeed a mystery and it is a gift which from one man's brain may found a movement which can change the face of the world, lifting whole civilisations to the gates of heaven, or casting whole nations into the nethermost pit of starvation, rapine and despair. Personality is superior even to the will and is the fundamental element in life throughout all the years of conscious being —

I am the master of my fate  
I am the captain of my soul. — W. E. Henley

In conclusion the ideal of a balanced personality is well defined in the supplication of a certain prelate obviously a man of wise and sane outlook on life. The prayer is of considerable antiquity and it was quoted by Professor Inglis in his presidential address to the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1941. It runs as follows —

"Give me a good digestion Lord, and also something to digest,  
Give me a healthy body Lord, with sense to keep it at its best.  
Give me a mind that is not bored that does not whimper  
whine or sigh

Don't let me trouble over much about that funny thing called 'I'  
Give me a sense of humour Lord give me the grace to see a joke  
To get a smile & pleasure from life and pass it on to other folk

## CHAPTER V

### EXAMINATIONS

A poor life this, if full of care  
We have no time to stand and stare —W. St Davies.

We have all suffered the strain occasioned by examinations. Some have shouldered the burden in a light-hearted manner, whereas in the case of others the load of anxiety and worry has indeed been heavy.

The Indian public has a pathetic faith in the importance of the academic examination, and the average business man will insist on a matriculation certificate from his trainees, though with but faint ideas of the scope and subjects of this examination. Yet the pendulum has swung with some violence in the other direction of recent years, and some educational and psychological pundits have been scathing in their denunciation of the examination system. Such condemnation is indeed an easy way of gaining the approbation of an audience, though the most violent of the detractors is usually the man who in his youth failed with monotonous regularity to surmount the various obstacles that were interposed in his path. The inference from oft-repeated examination failures is all too obvious, but this is far from suggesting that the unfortunate victim may not become a useful citizen in other branches of activity that do not lend themselves with such urgency to this form of inquisition.

It would seem indeed that the *via media* is as always the soundest and safest course. For examinations, provided

that they are conducted with humanity and skill, serve a useful purpose, and if they were eliminated and love of learning was substituted as the main motive for study there would be a few ardent spirits who would follow the chase with enthusiasm, but for the majority the pursuit would be a very half hearted affair.

This is not to suggest that examinations have not been allowed to attain too great importance in by gone days and even now education in most countries suffers from a surfeit of examinations but there will be nothing but chaos in the educational world if they are completely abolished, the only incentive being learning for its own sake. Moreover for the professions, examinations in some shape or form must be regarded as essential and the standard and status of all professions would fall appreciably if examinations during the general educational stage were discontinued.

The chief functions of educational examinations may be regarded as three in number —

- (1) To act as tests of achievement by ascertaining whether the pupil has acquired the necessary knowledge of the subject.
- (2) To supply an incentive for study.
- (3) To enable the teacher to find out the weak points in the pupil's knowledge and incidentally to keep the teacher himself up to scratch in his work.

It is a criticism and in general a fair one that examinations dominate and to some extent at least distort the whole curriculum of a school. Certainly the Matriculation Certificate exerts a preponderant influence on the work of India's High Schools and encourages the cramming of

set-books rather than serving the best influences of education. As a result some pupils acquire an active dislike of everything associated with schools, and lose all desire for further education. Furthermore, headmasters of the great majority of high schools have made Matriculation examinations an important feature in the advertising of the school, and statistics of the number of awards are trumpeted abroad at such functions as Speech Days. The corollary is that boys are called upon to take such examinations more than once and the whole business develops into a fetish. The writer is the by no means proud possessor of no fewer than four Higher Certificate parchments, and before this he sat for it unsuccessfully when 14 years of age.

Moreover there is a good deal of evidence in support of the accusation that the reliability of examination results is poor owing to discrepancies in the standard of examining, often due to differences of opinion between examiners regarding the relative merit of the examinees' answers. This is of course much more likely to be the case in subjective examinations of the Essay type than in more objective tests such as those associated with mathematics. Professor C W Valentine in an enquiry on the reliability of examinations has presented some startling figures showing how unreliable academic examinations can be. In some cases examinations would seem to be very unsatisfactory instruments of prediction of even academic merit.

Educationists in the United States have long favoured the objective or new-type test for measuring achievement. This type of examination is somewhat on the lines of the intelligence test, i.e., it contains a large number of brief

questions instead of a few long ones. Every question is designed so that all markers will agree as to the correctness of the answer moreover the number of the questions is so large that the whole field of knowledge can be sampled much more comprehensively than is the case with the relatively few questions set in the orthodox type of examination. At first sight this type of examination suggests a retrogression to the old type of question favoured in the British Army many years ago with its one and only correct solution. "What must the rifle be cleaned with"? "What must be kept on the range"? The respective answers being "great care" and 'perfect silence'. Actually this is by no means the case and these new type questions can test a pupil's knowledge over a wide range. The system reduces the amount of writing required to a minimum so that the examiner's marking is not distorted by considerations of literary style or bad writing. The new style examination in fact covers the whole system without the possibility of the personal feeling of the marker interfering with the accuracy of the result, and it is in fact a standardised test with results approaching the reliability of measurements made with a foot rule. Each question deals with one small point and is often answered by underlining one of a number of alternatives.

Obviously this type of examination only deals with strictly factual subjects—such as for example a knowledge of the working of an internal-combustion engine or of an objective study such as map-reading. The method lends itself to a great saving of time and energy and is being used in Army training schools. The ordinary man faces the new style of examination with less trepidation than

the old. He knows that if he fails it is his own fault and that no blame can be put on vagaries in the framing of the questions or on fluctuations in the temper of the examiner. There are, however, certain unfortunate features about this type of examination, the test itself requiring a good deal of time and a good deal of skill, if it is to be really satisfactory. The element of pure chance guessing also comes in to a certain extent. It must be admitted also that it tends to measure fragments of knowledge rather than the general understanding of a subject, and such features as the interpretation of facts, the formulation of knowledge, initiative and originality, are eliminated from the test. In fact it tests information rather than understanding. All these criticisms have some weight, but a new-type examination that has been thought out with care forms a very valuable instrument in the measurement of ability. Certain features of scholars' ability may be tested more readily by the new-type test, and others by the old essay-type, but it is only too true that both types of examination are but imperfect mental measuring instruments.

Quite apart from their limited reliability, success in examinations depends on other factors than the ability, the industry, and even the knowledge of the pupils. We all know how much the personal skill of the teacher enters into the matter, and his or her ability in predicting the nature of the questions. Obviously those schools with higher salary scales and with better prospects for the teacher have a real advantage over others in this respect. Some pupils possess an almost uncanny short-term memory, and are able to assimilate a host of facts for a few hours only. The speed of acquisition is nicely tem-

pered by the rapidity with which such knowledge is lost. Such students pass examinations well but it is this type that creates the severest critics of examinations as the benefit that they acquire is of the slightest. It has been wisely said that education is what remains when all that has been taught at school has been forgotten, but the speed with which the average Indian juvenile succeeds in forgetting much of what he or she has been taught is indeed phenomenal.

Statistical study of the validity of examinations as a measure of future ability has been undertaken on many occasions by comparing the subsequent achievement of pupils with examination results. One set of figures showed that of those who won University scholarships in England no fewer than two-fifths failed to justify their early promise. It is only too true that figures may be made to prove almost anything but it is tolerably certain that the employer in his search for a suitable staff will get far more trustworthy guidance from the more modern type of assessment—intelligence aptitude psychological tests and the like—than from the old fashioned type of examination.

Much controversy has raged and is raging in connection with the Matriculation Certificate which has come in for more severe criticism than any other examination. This is mainly no doubt owing to its wide-reaching tentacles which embrace most boys and girls undergoing secondary education. According to the extreme opponents of this examination the purity of the educational stream is polluted beyond all hope by reason of the decontamination introduced into it by the various school-examining Universities and the minds of the boys and girls suffer

atrophy as a result of their efforts to pass this and other tests. It is no doubt only too true that for nervous children examinations may become an obsession, and that the examination fiend tends to make of education a competitive system. Shakespeare is read not because he is a superb poet of outstanding genius but because one of his plays has been chosen as a special subject in the English paper of the Matriculation Examination. Moreover under the influence of the examination bogey, teaching is largely confined to certain bits and pieces that are most likely to achieve satisfactory results in the examinations.

Much of this is no doubt true, but it is far easier to criticise than to prescribe a remedy. Sensible suggestions sponsored by educational experts are being formulated for the reform of the standard examinations, but the complete abolition of examinational tests on the lines of the Matriculation would quickly lead to chaos, at any rate as far as secondary education is concerned. Furthermore, the Matriculation examination itself affords a good deal of protection against an even more insidious enemy to education—that of over-specialisation. For the scientist and the engineer, over-specialisation is to be particularly deplored. The background of their subject is the material world, as well as material interests (in man) in many aspects, whereas the background of the literary studies is made up of human ideals. To miss these is to miss those very qualities that foster leadership. The Matriculation examination has the saving grace of compelling the boy and girl to learn a modicum about a variety of subjects before settling down to learn more and more about less and less.

Even less satisfactory than the examination as an appraisement of ability is an undue dependence on the written testimonial. Writers of these have this in common with those who inscribe epitaphs on tombstones that they are not on their oath. Unless a testimonial is almost fulsome in tone it is apt to be interpreted as damning with faint praise. It is safe to say that no wise man will take serious cognizance of a flattering testimonial, unless the composer is well known to him, at least by reputation. The weakness of testimonials is that it is in the nature of some men to be very prodigal of eulogy whereas others are sparing in this respect. Nor is it altogether unusual for the referee to sign a testimonial which has been virtually composed by the person to whom reference is made. In fact, dealings in testimonials have become so conventionalised as to make them—in many cases at least—almost a matter of meaningless formality.

A real danger in the ever increasing multiplicity of professional and technical qualifications is that the number and range of institutional examinations is growing at an equal rate. The British public dearly loves a string of letters on a brass plate and there has been a marked tendency of recent years in Britain for 'phoney' institutions—some of the bogus University type—to arise. The number and variety of semi technical institutions is also increasing and there is a very definite need for an integration and a classification of these and the elimination of not a few. The time is certainly ripe for some Parliamentary or legislative action in regard to this. At present it is possible in Britain and possibly in India for any body of men to form a bogus University or Institution and to confer degrees or associations. When this is attempted

it is sometimes the case that force of public opinion—often expressed through a newspaper or journal—brings about the elimination of the 'phoney' institution after a good deal of mischief has been done. Possibly the disillusionment of the unfortunate seeker after easily acquired and therefore worthless qualifications is well deserved, but the public has a right to be protected from such abuses, and more reputable institutions are also caused a good deal of inconvenience as well as what is tantamount to a depreciation in their currency.

The Norwood Committee on the curriculum and examinations in Secondary Schools in Britain published their report in June 1943, and it is an intriguing document full of interest to the educationist. Part 2 deals with the vexed question of examinations and the suggestions are drastic and far-reaching. It is proposed that the School Certificate should be virtually abolished in its present form, and that there should be merely an internal school examination conducted by the teachers at the school on syllabuses and papers framed by themselves. A transitional period of seven years is recommended, after which a further intermediate period may be suggested. The reasons for and against the School Certificate are marshalled in the Committee's report with skill and impartiality.

It is realised that examinations play a very necessary part in the school economy, but it is maintained with much emphasis and cogency that this part should be strictly subordinate and that such an examination is best conducted by the teachers themselves. It is felt that this examination will merely be part of a general assessment of the pupil by the teacher, who should be best able to form a

correct judgment on him or her. The attainment of this will throw a very much greater responsibility on the teacher and it can hardly be expected that the proposal will be a success unless the teaching profession attains wider freedom and partakes of greater public confidence than is the case at present. So that the whole success of the new proposals is bound up with the efficiency of the teacher and therefore the degree to which the teaching profession attracts the pick of the community.

It is emphasized in the report that much more could be done by way of improving and amplifying the school records. These should furnish an accurate judgment on the pupils, based on trustworthy data well validated, and carefully co-ordinated. The new form of School Certificate would then be a far more valuable document than the old as it would not only provide details of the internal examinations passed by the pupil, but also a record of the share which he or she had taken in the general life of the school. In other words it would contain a record of personality with accurate information about his capacity and performance throughout the school career. It would be carrying out the task that Cleisthenes King of Sicyon was attempting to perform in appraising his daughter's suitors 24 centuries ago and which such bodies as Services Selection Boards are trying to carry out nowadays. Such a document would be of the utmost value to employers in assessing the claims of applicants for employment but it depends implicitly on the teacher. It is well known that some masters at schools have a distinct tendency to describe all their fees as swans whereas there are a host—less numerous it is true—who fail to do justice to their pupil's true worth. The only school examination

that the Norwood Committee recommends, conducted by external agencies, is the School Leaving Examination. It is suggested that this should be taken normally about the age of 18, and its main object would be to satisfy University Entrance requirements. It is also intended to replace the Higher Certificate (which is also to be abolished) as some stimulus towards the work in the sixth form at a secondary school. The purpose of this examination would be to provide evidence of an all-round education, and it would be of a purely qualifying nature with no competitive element. This examination would also be available as an entry examination for certain professional bodies and institutions just as the Higher Certificate is at present.

In academic subjects such as literature and mathematics, which form the foundation for future cultural or practical activity, no other instrument so efficient as a written examination has yet been discovered. It is essential to discriminate between the pupil who has made the most of his educational opportunities and the one who has done nothing of the kind. Anyone who has had experience of internal examinations will appreciate the difference between the correction of papers by tired masters at the fag-end of the term, and the meticulous care normally taken by a University Board in the setting and marking of papers, and will wonder whether the abolition of the external examination is wise. An alternative remedy would be not to abandon examinations but to improve them. It should be possible, for example, to include a compulsory general information paper which would actively encourage a wide digression from the fixed syllabus. The local school examination will never attain

the prestige of an examination conducted by an outside authority. The standard of marking will vary widely from school to school, and any comparison becomes quite impossible. A public examination is a useful stimulus to a lazy boy and even more so to a lazy master.

In general it is all too true that many of us read too much and especially of the newspapers. It is frequently nothing more than an excuse for mental laziness and is a common cause of lack of personality. Less reading and more thinking would render most of us more articulate and with more ideas of our own. Character and individuality are not acquired by reading and least of all by perusing the popular press. Nor do examinations provide the necessary equipment for clear thought, imagination, and initiative—the very essence of a well balanced personality.

It is a fair criticism of the Norwood report that it has little of value about science. It stresses the limitation of science and the scientific method—there is nothing of the limitation of other methods whether in art or history or religion. Plausible platitudes emphasize learning and knowledge for its own sake but in the search for truth as opposed to the 'provisional findings of special sciences' it certainly suggests the hankering after traditional ideas and opposition to changes in the existing order. Criticism is easy but at a time when society is passing through a revolutionary period educational principles need more adjustment than the report proposes. It is necessary to think in terms of facilitating social changes, and little is said in support of this.

As regards examinations in India the Sargent report has a good deal to say on the subject and it is stressed that in

India more than in most other countries the standards of the public examinations are not only low but that the generally accepted idea is to regard them almost as a fetish. Few people think of examinations as a means to an end, the end being a reasonable degree of culture to be used in after life. Here again the gross under-payment of teachers does an infinity of harm as it causes the standard of the teaching to be low, it leads to the overworking of masters and mistresses and it has been the underlying cause for the examinational scandals some of which have received their full mead of publicity in recent months.

To-day as during and after the last war there is talk in abundance of school reform embracing "equality of opportunity". But there is little appreciation that a re-examination of the very ideals and aims in education is ripe, and that the real need is for a new outlook. Education is the chief medium whereby society can be remoulded, the term education in the broadest sense to include the religious and the moral background. Both Britain and India are far from being an intelligent, informed and enlightened nation, and it is necessary to face up to the fact that much of the money that is lavished on the educational budget provides a very poor return. Schools are far from being closely linked to the needs of the community, and their environment hampers many children from obtaining the best value from their far from perfect schooling. Education and the acquisition of knowledge are far from synonymous. Scientific feeding, as an example, is one of the bases of health, but what schools consider this matter to any serious extent or realise that health and nutrition are closely integrated? The object of education is to develop personality, and the ordinary

citizen has every right to interest himself in educational matters while leaving the details to the expert. The conception of training for life is all too easily regarded as training for a station in life and there is little understanding of the purpose and potentialities of education. Different types of schools are needed—there is nothing so stifling as drab uniformity—but this does not rule out a common culture which is the birthright of every child whether he is to be tinker tailor soldier or sailor. Learning by doing is a practice that is quite as valuable as learning by books and it is possible that with the shackles of examinations less rigidly clamped down schools may be able to organise studies in this direction far more effectively than in the past. Class teaching is by no means the only method. Problems there are in abundance and it is crystal clear that conditions do not allow of rapid modifications. But there is no time to lose and nowhere is the need for adaptation to new conditions more urgent than in the world of education. The rising generation must be given a sense of purpose and we must arouse for the tasks of peace that spirit of service and that devotion to duty that it has hitherto taken a war to kindle.

## CHAPTER VI

### EDUCATION FOR LEADERSHIP IN INDIA

“The universe is one big book, and life is one big school”

—Lin Yutang

It is very evident that education and training are vital matters in the quest for leadership, for it is in the formative years of youth that the character of a man is built up, whether for good or for ill. Institutions as wide apart as the Nazis and the Jesuits have taken this essential truth to heart and it is for this that the re-education of Germany is such a thorny problem. Many of us can still remember Arioistus, that arrogant German prince whom we first met in Caesar's “*de bello Gallico*” German mentality even in those days was not easily weaned from war!

For education is the process by which we fit personality into its environment. A man's environment is both physical and spiritual, so that his business in life is to make the best use of his abilities to develop his personality in both directions. In no country has much progress been made in the fulfilment of the aim of education as defined by Aristotle—that its object is to teach men to use their leisure rightly. Indeed in the case of India it is regrettably true that the stage has not even been reached when the average person has much leisure to use so that, by and large, this definition of Aristotle hardly arises!

Of education in India it is unfortunately the case that much that is bad in British education has been slavishly copied and much that is good has been altogether

ignored—It is only necessary to read the Sargent report to appreciate the impossibility of building up anything that is worthwhile on the rickety foundations of India's present educational system for there we find and particularly in India's nineteen Universities the ignoble art of cramming reduced to its most debased and most degraded form. Little effort is even attempted to fit the student for leadership or to implant in him a right sense of judgment. The degree is all that matters and that by fair means or by foul.

It is plain that opportunities for study cannot avail much in the creation of a cultivated society unless that society really values culture. How far has India gone in that direction at present? It is almost a truism that the training of the young is conditioned by the standard of the mature society for which the young are being prepared. So that the intellectual life of a community is governed by the value that is set on learning and general culture by the adult population. The relative lack of concern for the present state of mass illiteracy in India—not to mention the miserable pittance that is paid to her teachers—gives a crude but not altogether unjust indication of the value that India places on erudition.

Certainly there are few countries in which ethical training and practice are less in evidence. In few countries is orthodoxy with its ugly but numerous accompaniments—such as superstition, untouchability, child marriages, caste and illiteracy—more strongly entrenched. In few countries has ethical progress—the type of progress that has abolished sati, infanticide, thugee, child marriages, enforced widowhood and the like—been more hotly contested. And yet it is a country with a kindly, patient and hardworking

people with many virtues, and a people that could be moulded under wise leadership into material and moral greatness India is indeed a medley of beauty, mysticism and quiet simplicity together with crudity, vulgarity and make-belief It is only necessary to visit one of India's military training centres to realise what fine material is available The new recruit straight from the most "jungly" village is turned in a few weeks into a vigorous, level-headed and disciplined sepoy full of self-respect and with high morale We all know the proud record that India's fighting men have made for themselves on a thousand battlefields

It is in this type of establishment rather than in her high schools and Universities that India is training her future leaders and that is because moral and physical well-being is practised instead of mere book-learning But in time of peace we must in the main look to the civilian training grounds for the young Indian with initiative, originality and enterprise and that is why educational reform is so vital For the right qualities will never be produced so long as love of security, complacency, smug self-satisfaction and an ultra-respect for parental influence play so baneful a part It is regrettably true that it is impossible to imagine the emergence of dynamic leaders from India's high-schools and India's universities in their present setting

For India's educational establishments have one god alone It is the god of the examination and to it they dedicate the whole of their worship and tribute Matriculation for the high-school and the degree in the case of the University is the be-all and the end-all of the whole business and this because they provide a key to sedentary

employment and one that opens the door to that which seems to be prized above jewels—the job of sitting on an office stool working for long hours at a fantastically low salary. No one thinks of matriculation as the beginning of a process of self-education whose object is the leading of a full and useful life. Few young Indians seem to realise that a degree is not merely a passport to some low grade clerical employment but a means of making a start on a steep and stony ascent that leads to something that is not to be measured by mere rupees. The Congress Party has done useful work in this respect by stressing the value of handicraft and the importance of the village industry.

For it is a problem of the first order in India to inculcate pride of tradesmanship and a higher respect for the art of the craftsman. In no country is "black coat" snobbery more in evidence among the so called intelligentsia and in no country is reluctance to undergo craftsman apprenticeship more pronounced. A large percentage of graduates leaving Engineering colleges are satisfied with the mere smattering of workshop training that is given in the College shops and never undergo the proper two or three years workshop apprenticeship that is insisted on in European Engineering practice for a full professional qualification in Mechanical or Electrical engineering. India has produced good craftsmen throughout the ages—albeit in somewhat specialised directions—but the products of her young industries will never be of the highest quality until workshop skill and technical training is given more encouragement. A great deal of press publicity has been given in India to the Bevin boys, the Indian youths who have been sent to Britain for training in in

dustrial methods. But these have been a mere handful and it is regrettably true that the average young Indian in general and the young Brahmin in particular does not take kindly to work that involves workshop training and dirty hands

Moreover if India is to obtain those leaders of a type that are really wanted she must pay more attention to the kind of training that facilitates powers of observation and the application of the senses, and especially those of sight. We all know that the training carried out in the Services aims at mutual alertness and physical health as well as moral health which is the very foundation of all good team-work. In how many of India's high-schools can it be said that any attempt is made in this direction? It is true that a visit to an average high-school will disclose a little volley-ball and other Indian games—possibly even cricket or hockey—being played by the pupils after work hours, but how many of the Staff take part in this and where is any attempt made to appreciate the essential fact that the organ of human intelligence is not the brain alone but the whole body from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot? Rudyard Kipling, a lover of India if ever there was one, reminds us of this essential truth in his *Land and Sea Tales*—

Nations have passed away and left no traces  
And history gives the naked cause of it  
One single simple reason in all cases  
They fell because their people were not fit,

It is true that something of the sort is attempted and effectively so in the few high grade schools of the British Public School type and also in the so-called Military Schools, but it is a fair criticism of India's system of

education as carried out at present that little or no training is even attempted in physical fitness or indeed in the power of accurate and rapid observation let alone in the power of interpreting what is observed swiftly and correctly. This is surely an essential of effective citizenship as well as of effective leadership and such training adds much to the enjoyment and value of life. The country man usually acquires these qualities to some extent but not so the townsman unless he has belonged to a good troop of Scouts. It is idle to pretend that the power of observation cannot be taught—the Services have given the lie to that—but under the present water tight compartment system of teaching it is no one's business to attempt to obviate these shortcomings. Ask the young Indian for example who has been taught in parrot fashion the principle of the telescope whether he can find his way by the stars? The answer can be confidently predicted as being in an emphatic negative. And yet the very core of education lies in the capacity for intelligent observation.

The Sargent Committee has worked out a long range policy for India's educational future and the report is an essential study by those who have India's welfare at heart. It is difficult to conceive a great future for a country when only a small percentage of the population is literate and only a fraction of those has more than a smattering of genuine knowledge. Of course a howl has gone up that the cost will be an impossible burden but it is purely an internal expense and large hidden resources of wealth are untapped in a country where there are no estate duties and as far as the States are concerned no income tax.

History has never produced an example of a country which has found expenditure on elementary education

other than beneficial. And with such training in literacy there must go as well some training in mind and character. This only exists at present in a few highly privileged establishments and the degree of pilfering, graft, black markets and such like delinquencies in India will only then be reduced. We laugh at older standards of conduct and in Britain it is termed Victorian prudishness and it is said that with social security we shall bear each other's burdens, but for many of the community, both in India and elsewhere, the practical interpretation of this up to the present has been the lifting of much personal property!

As far as India is concerned it would seem almost impossible to secure any improved ethical standard or even to secure a healthy attitude on simple citizenship so long as caste remains enthroned among so great a proportion of the community and communal and creed differences remain at their present level. How can there be any inculcation of the spirit of service—service to God and service to man—as long as these barriers remain? India wants such qualities as tolerance, sympathy and individuality in her boys and girls quite as much as other growing nations. The aim of education is to give a young person a true sense of value in his or her outlook on life and one upon which his relationship with others, individually, collectively and even internationally, must depend. And the purpose of schooling is the development of character so that the young adult may not only be equipped to earn a living but also may fashion and extend his personality throughout his life. In what schools of India is one word of this taught, nor has anyone the courage to preach that such matters are in reality far

more important than the rapidity with which India attains her full political freedom.

And India in common with other nations is receiving her full meed of post war planning but the planner here as elsewhere is all too prone to regard four hundred million souls as material for social and political reform—often at so many to the square mile—instead of as four hundred million sparks of Divine genius. Unless this individual conception is realised and placed in its right perspective good feeling sympathy human understanding and kindred virtues get left far behind. And it is pathetically true of Mother India that these are the very qualities of which she is in the greatest need.

And what about India's nineteen Universities and where do they the occupants of the topmost rung on the Educational ladder stand in the quest for India's leaders? It has been truly stated that the function of a University is not merely to pursue learning for its own sake but also to train the youth of the community to collaborate so effectively that the vitality of the nation may be steadily increased and its material and spiritual progress consistently maintained.

The original idea of a University was one of uniformitas the acceptance of certain common ideals by men of education. There was a republic of letters, nor was there any hint of narrow nationalism about this conception. The young men—mere boys in some cases—who graduated in the Universities of Europe from Coimbra in the South to S. Andreas in the North had a common culture. The position of Latin as a universal academic language helped in this and it is for the Universities of the whole world

to get back the tradition of such common ideals under the very altered conditions of modern life

It is necessary in this connection to consider what are the true aims of a University, and the first of these is surely the building up of those qualities of mind and character which are the essence of a well-balanced personality. The necessary professional training which it is the duty of the student to undertake, comes second to this. The furtherance of research, and that in no narrow sense, is yet another function of the University. It should not merely disseminate knowledge, it should also advance it.

"There are" says Newman in the *Idea of a University* "three great subjects on which human reason employs itself God, nature and man". Of these the book of nature is called science and the book of man is called literature. In their studies of these by the students whether at school or at College we must be sure that strong and deep-seated motives make their appeal. Are not these motives in the main both crude and egoistic in Indian educational institutions? The desire to pass examinations for self-advancement comes a long way first, and more altruistic motives such as the satisfaction of intellectual interest and the urge to create can hardly be said to exist.

There is nothing of the feature so strong in dictatorship countries that school and society are one organic unit. Youth is there trained to feel that it has a mission, and is devoted to obedience to a common cause. It is this spirit of service that has produced the astonishing success of the Boy Scout Movement with its appeal to a powerful instinct in human life. The 'exam and cram' type of education will never grip the youth or bring about the development of human personality. This is not to suggest that

India should imitate the dictatorship system—propaganda and education make unsatisfying bed fellows—and intolerance and bias are fatal poisons for young minds—but there is good as well as evil in the Fascist and Nazi systems, and the appeal to loyalty and enthusiasm in the spirit of service are motives of the highest value. The aims of education for citizenship have been summed up under four headings—a sense of social responsibility, a love of truth and freedom, the power of clear thinking in every day affairs and a knowledge of the broad political, economic and scientific facts of the modern world. These aims are three-fold emotional, intellectual and practical and it is for the University to satisfy these requirements in the best way possible. The Universities of India can at least begin to study this subject of education for citizenship along these lines.

It is a criticism in a chapter on education for leadership that little has been said with any direct bearing on the subject. This is because it is fatal to attempt any training of a specific leadership class. There lies the road to Fascist and Nazi principles. For the leader emerges by interaction with the group and any specific leadership training may be very appropriate in a 'Military College' but is entirely unsuitable in a democratic University—Leaders must be produced by fostering the creative spirit in boys and girls and letting the leader emerge. In this free interplay of student activities it is important that there should be the fullest intermingling between students of widely different outlook. Hence the mistake of segregating together all students reading one single subject such as Engineering. Indeed we all know how much we have gained by this system of mutual education. Many of us

gratefully remember that some of the best instruction ever received has been as man to man or boy to boy in private talks on problems and difficulties

And sometimes I remember days of old  
 When fellowship seem'd not so far to seek,  
 And all the world and I seemed much less cold,  
 And at the rainbow's foot lay surely gold,  
 And hope was strong, and life itself not weak

The success of a school, of a college and of a university can never rest on mere teaching, but is bound up with the corporate life and the corporate spirit that grows out of an intimate association between teacher and student. There is all the difference in the world between the school-master or tutor and the mere teacher. It is in the years after matriculation—in the school and at the University—that the sense of social responsibility is best developed. This will only take place in an intimate atmosphere created by a staff who not merely teach but throw their whole personality into the institution in a spirit of willing service. Sense and manners are nine-tenths of civilization, and it is to the residential college rather than the University to which we must look for education in the highest sense.

The Sargent report is temperate in its criticisms of India's Universities but these are none the less severe. The standard of the degrees is pathetically low. The proportion of arts to science students which is conditioned mainly by the relative cost, is completely out of balance, and the standard of teaching is poor. In consequence the product is little valued when the course is completed and the average student drifts into the type of employment for which matriculation is an adequate qualification. In time

of peace many fail to find employment altogether. Teachers are shockingly badly paid and teaching methods are unduly conservative with little use of such appliances as the epidiascope or the kinema. It is but dimly appreciated that instruction is, in general, more easily and more directly acquired through the eye than through the ear. Hence the old fashioned 'chalk and talk' system reigns supreme. One hears a good deal now-a-days about scandals in examinations and dishonourable practices. It is surely even more reasonable to wonder why so many teachers are still honourable, so low is the scale on which their remuneration is based. Until India comes to regard teaching as a dynamic profession and one worthy of remuneration comparable to that in her Civil Service, little can be done to make Indian education a satisfactory process. We want young Indians full of initiative, originality and enterprise since security, self-complacency and an ultra respect for parental influence will never give India the dynamic leaders that she must have in the future. Enthusiasm is the quality so often lacking in India's Universities unless a lecturer can fire the imagination of his audience he will never be of much use. The primary aim must be to awaken the critical faculty and to teach the students to assess evidence and to form a reasoned judgment—their acquisition of mere factual knowledge is subsidiary. In how many of India's Universities is this a generally accepted conception with first principles coming first?

Indeed it is only too true both in India and elsewhere that the whole position of the lecture tends to be given undue importance in University education. This is of

course because it provides a means whereby a single teacher can keep a large number of students gainfully employed. It has been said, with an apology to Wordsworth, that "lectures are but a sleep and a forgetting" and certainly the lecture is such a passive means of instruction that it must be really good to justify itself. And how many professors, overburdened perhaps with the care of a large family at Rs 200 a month, are likely to comply with this? It is recognised that the classic system of disputation is hardly possible under modern conditions—let alone in India where the proportion of students to teacher is astronomically high—but even here something could be done to obviate lecturing the students into a degree with a maximum of spoon-feeding of facts and a minimum of genuine education and culture. It is my firm belief that if India had the courage to double her standard of University education and to halve the number of students, the results would be more than worth while. It is the activity of the pupil himself in searching, observing, contrasting, comparing and amplifying that is to be encouraged, with the teacher taking his part by stimulating the pupils' interest. The formal lecture does nothing to satisfy this. Moreover in technical subjects there is an inevitable lag between practice and teaching that can never be overcome. Teaching therefore should be restricted to fundamentals, current practice being only used as a means of illustration.

The genius of the good teacher resides in the seeds that he plants in the minds of his pupils by reason of his personality. The leadership of the teacher should be persuasive rather than dominant. Rudyard Kipling ap-

preciated this and paid his tribute to the worth of this kind of teacher in his prelude to *Stalky & Co.* —

Let us now praise famous men  
Men of little showing  
Men whose word stays broad and deep  
Far beyond their knowing

Research is always an important consideration in a University even if often a subsidiary one. Here India is less backward than in many other respects. One of the most encouraging features in India's future is the increasing number of young scientists that India is training— young men who are achieving not merely a national but an international reputation. The number is not large in proportion to India's population but the quality is good. The trend is admittedly towards 'pure' rather than applied research but the difference is not so great as was sometimes thought. After all, Clark Maxwell's researches in the realm of pure mathematics were as important in the evolution of radio as the work of Marconi himself. Research must be a triple partnership between Government, industry and University if overlapping is to be avoided. Here again we want quality even at the expense of quantity. The writer has interviewed young Indians claiming to be engaged in research who were pitifully lacking in a knowledge of the first principles of the subject in which they were engaged. Such men will never be more than laboratory assistants.

The development of industry after the war will call for a large increase of skilled technical and research workers in India. One wonders whether Indian Universities appreciate their responsibility in this important matter. Education is an integrated structure and the Technical

Colleges must preserve the closest possible contacts with the Universities. For industry needs the continual refreshment of new ideas and the Universities must play their part in this. Social and economic problems also enter into this picture just as much as technology—there can be no better training for the young teacher of economics than to make close contacts with seekers after economic truth in India's factories. In research in particular the contacts between University and industry should amount almost to integration. The young University teacher must get right away from his cloistered calm both in education and research and study and explore the methods of other men and of other nations. For there was never so much need in education of men capable of rising above a narrow lecture-room atmosphere and determined to instil into their pupils what is glibly termed character and leadership but which must be impressed into a rapidly changing world if utter chaos is to be avoided. And there was never a time when the world was more in need of men responsive to new ideas. India must have such men—yes and women too—competent to give her sons and daughters the guidance for which she is looking and to act as leaders in her many problems. It is all very well to have an alleged alien Government as a whipping boy but it has been stated with some show of truth that the average Indian is most averse from accepting the responsibilities that full self-government entail. It is far better to face up to the facts and to appreciate that there are many unpleasant things such as military service, high taxation, estate duties and the like which political freedom and self-government entail. Ethical considerations are also involved and the Universities of India have

problems ahead the magnitude and scope of which may not be fully appreciated. It is no good clinging to tradition and to the ways of an earlier view of life which has gone beyond all hope of return.

We are living in a time when changes are taking place with the utmost rapidity and those changes whether in political, social, economic or technical conditions constitute a challenge to the Universities, which should always be in the forefront in their contribution to the shaping of the future. At the present juncture those changes are occurring faster than the normal speed of ordered educational progress. India has been largely spared the loss of so many of her promising young men in comparison with other nations but it is also true that the number of genuine leaders in comparison with her population is pitifully inadequate. The men who can make decisions are so few—if anything is to be done some answer seems almost inevitable such as 'I will ask my brother or father or mother' The average Indian in business can only do routine work—we all know that the slightest question is referred to the boss. Of course India has her great industrial leaders—men like Tata, Birla, Walchand Hirachand and so on but the number can be counted almost on the fingers of both hands. "Who's Who in India" must become a very much thicker volume in the future. India wants far more trained and informed minds men who can make decisions in the knowledge that leadership is not a privilege but a duty and a trust. When such men with the right degree of enlightenment imagination and initiative come along modern selection methods, in the use of which India is far ahead of many other countries, will see that they are suitably placed and suitably rewarded.

But if the problems are vast so are the chances. The scholars of the world will have their opportunity of making a bigger contribution than ever before in the mobilization in all countries of organised intelligence, not for the purpose of waging war but in the winning of a lasting peace. For it is education alone that will enable India to avoid the many pitfalls in her path. The struggle for light is more urgent than the struggle for power. Education is light and the quest of the human spirit is summed up in Goethe's dying cry—"light, more light." It was centuries ago that a Brahmin sage laid down the following dictum—"If by running away thou canst escape death then by all means try to avoid danger, but if all that lives must die then why run away and spoil thy good name?" The phrasing of the original Sanskrit has no doubt an added charm but a country like India that has not accepted the Christian way of living must learn to impress such sentiments on her young manhood and womanhood in their ethical upbringing.

## CHAPTER VII

### LEADERSHIP IN INDIA'S INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

In every rank, or great or small  
"Tis industry supports us all.

— Gay'

It has been emphasized in the previous chapter that the aftermath of the war gives an unrivalled opportunity for the exercise of leadership in all countries. India in particular will need the spirit of adventure and the encouragement of initiative in her young men as never before if she is to make the most of the situation in which she finds herself. Those men drawn from industry and commerce who have made a success of life in one of the Services, when required to shoulder far bigger responsibilities than were ever offered in time of peace deserve a greater share in the responsibilities of business and they will be frustrated if this is not forthcoming.

For those of us whose duties have involved a close study of young officers cannot fail to have noticed the subtle changes that have taken place in these young men—mere boys in some cases—who joined up early in the War. The man who was previously in employment calling for no great initiative has either blossomed out or withered under the load of responsibility and it is up to his new employer to give him a proper chance when it is certain that his personality has been tempered and refined under the fierce heat of battle.

In the planning of industrial re-organisation both in India and elsewhere it is therefore essential that every opportunity should be given for the advancement of the man who has shown his worth. This is far from suggesting that the road should be altogether easy—the climb should be by ladder and not by escalator—but the ladder should be there and available for the best man to finish at the top without regard for community, caste or creed. Industry and commerce have a right to demand their full proportion of the men who possess qualities of initiative, resource and leadership. Such men are comparatively rare in India and when found these qualities should be fostered by wise and imaginative training.

Psychology comes into the picture here for psychology is the study of human behaviour, but this type of psychology will not be acquired from books but by social contact and in the spirit of service. Social contact is a term that includes the relations of a man to his fellows. The Services can teach more about this subject than elsewhere because in the Services there is no question of a working week of 44 hours and the social contact between leader and led is a vital matter upon which the morale of a unit intimately depends. Group morale depends on the degree of cohesion within the group and that in turn is a function of the social contact between the leader and his followers. The leader must be capable—to some extent at least—of focusing in his own person the common ideals, hopes and purpose of the group, whether that purpose is running a school, winning a football match or even a war. India wants the type of man with an enquiring mind, whose outlook towards his fellows is good and who won't take things for granted. This type of man will decline to carry on

with some undesirable practice on the ground that it was done by his father and grandfather before him. Kipling summed up this line of thought in his incisive style and they are words that a young man starting in life may well take to heart —

I kept six honest serving men  
They taught me all I knew  
Their names are what and why and when  
And how and where and who

The circumstances of the war have given India an opportunity that will never recur. To start with, she has become for the first time in her history a creditor nation and to no mean extent. Previously she owed Britain a vast debt, but now the reverse is the case and to a figure running into many hundreds of million sterling. The calamity of war has forced Great Britain to part with her hard-earned external savings—a process that the British Chancellor euphemistically terms overseas-disinvestment! In addition India's railways are now all her own and with considerable improvements, especially in their carrying capacity due to the war. Her industries have also been vastly expanded and several millions of her men as well as many thousands of her women have had their health their leadership and their mental outlook and habits of life vastly improved by reason of the training they have received since the outbreak of war. It is true that there has been an inflation of the currency and the purchasing power of the rupee has declined but no country is immune from such influences in time of war and the price level tends to go down rather than up at present, thanks to better Government control of essential commodities. These opportunities are moreover fully appre-

ciated and various schemes such as the Bombay Plan have been initiated to take advantage of the improved situation.

Whether the improvement under these reconstruction plans will be by public or private enterprise or a suitable combination of both has yet to be decided. In general, private enterprise is too much concerned with prospects of early profit and the Indian financier is notoriously nervous of risks and that is why so overwhelming a percentage of Indian improvements—such as railways, civil engineering schemes and the like—have been financed in the past from overseas. But direct governmental management of industry and commerce has also many drawbacks. At the best the wheels of government activity are clogged with bureaucratic mud, at the worst the door is open to sinister conspiracies such as were put into action in Germany by I G Farbenindustrie, the controlling influence in the early days behind the Nazi regime. Even men of business seem to find themselves, like Laacoon, strangled in the coils of bureaucratic control. Cartels and combines are often opiates, lulling men into delusions of peace and prosperity.

There is no doubt that there is room for a great improvement in the quality of Indian production and this will only be brought about by improved craftsmanship and superior workshop organisation. Walk into any shop from Kashmir to Travancore and ask for a manufactured article that is fabricated in India. You will be shown a cheaper article made in India (or possibly in Japan) and a more expensive but better quality article made in Europe or U S A. It is only by education and training that the necessary increase in technical skill can be secured which will put an end to this and it is only then

that there will be achieved in India that high level in productivity—both in quality and quantity—which is so essential if labour is to be adequately rewarded. We all know that this is far from the case in modern India to-day. In administration, India's industries are far from following out those principles of scientific management at which the Americans are so expert. In U S A there has been a much closer investigation than elsewhere of the elimination both of fatigue and of superfluous motion. The books of such men as Dr Gilbreth are revealing to a degree. The saving of time and labour in machine shop processes by efficiency experts has sometimes been startling. The guiding principle that employés are human beings and not automatons, will by itself achieve a good deal. In India with its horde of unskilled and badly paid labour this subject has scarcely been considered.

Then again in American practice it is fully recognised that managers must spend much of their time in the works. In India it seems usual for the manager to remain under a fan in his comfortable office and to send down his written instructions to the 'hands'. When Stalin asked his countrymen to combine Russian revolutionary enthusiasm with American efficiency he knew what he was talking about. Indeed leadership in the highest sense is wanted both on the operation and on the management side. Trade Unions are young in India but both sides have much to learn if India is to be spared the misfortunes due to mutual mistrust and suspicions.

The ideals of leadership in a commercial unit differ widely from that in a fighting service. In business, elasticity is so much in demand and problems of rupees and annas are so directly involved. Fundamental qualities

such as a grasp of basic principles and powers of judgment are implicit in both, but it is the persuasive leader that is best suited to commerce and the man who is continually looking out for improvements. There is all the difference in the world in a business enterprise between the genuine leader and the mere boss. The difference has been put in an American publication in the following apt comparison —

Boss	or	Leader ?
Drives his men		Coaches them.
Depends on authority		Depends on good-will
Inspires fear		Inspires enthusiasm
Says "I"		Says "We"
Fixes blame for breakdown		Fixes breakdown
Knows how it is done		Shews how
Makes work a drudgery		Makes it a game

There is ample room in a well ordered firm for leadership at the bottom as well as at the top. The management must always be looking out for junior leaders with a view to promotion. Intelligence and leadership is shewn in the possession of creative imagination and a well ordered factory will have a system of prizes and rewards for improvements in technique. In one relatively small firm in Scotland over 1,200 suggestions were submitted in six months, nearly 400 of which were from office boys. In this firm, prizes were based on 50 percent of the first year's savings, and a payment to one operative alone was of the equivalent of 2,500 rupees.

For the man at the top the ability to choose the right assistants is the vital concern, as he will fail completely if he tries to grasp too many details on his own. It is so easy to get submerged in a mass of non-essentials and thus to lose that resilience of mind that is so necessary in dealing

with the things that really matter. The success and even the very survival of a business sometimes depends on this. Some of the world's greatest leaders have been but moderate judges of men and they have suffered in their leadership from this. Napoleon's Marshals for example were in the main but second rate.

Another matter of the first importance is that no automatic rights should be accorded to the son of the Boss. India is a country that is suffering now and likely to suffer more in her industrialised future from an excess of nepotism. It is a country in which the very word 'Socialism' is taboo and it is held as almost axiomatic that the son or sons should succeed to the family business as a matter of course and sometimes regardless of capacity and training. It is surely not fitting in a country making any claim to democratic practice that a lad should be allowed to shelter too snugly under the family umbrella and that he should succeed as of right to the management. It is so important that the promising recruit to industry should have an avenue open to him right up to the top and should be given work involving real responsibilities.

Furthermore, in many industrial and commercial organisations both in Britain and in India there exists in between a sound and level headed management a stratum of second rate material composed of men who have risen quite as high as their limited natural ability permits, and there they remain, perpetuating in a stolid and pains taking fashion the mistakes of their predecessors. The young men of promise many with conspicuous ability and youthful enthusiasm albeit untempered by experience are quite unable to penetrate through this stagnant stratum and the enterprise lacks the progressive outlook.

that is developed by young men of ability and initiative. The remedy for this is to provide an adequate number of personal assistants to Managing Directors, which posts these young hopefuls could fill, and which would give them and their ideas direct access to the departmental heads. It would also tend to induce men of outstanding ability to remain on the technical side, and would prevent the continual loss of good technologists owing to the better pay and better promise which so often exists in administration.

Not that administration is in any way unimportant—indeed it is in the sphere of industrial management that so many weaknesses are to be found in our present system. Industrial management is a skilled profession, requiring not only high personal qualities of enterprise and imagination, but also an appropriate form of special training. Indian Universities and cognate educational establishments are as yet far from appreciating this. Furthermore the really expert manager is relatively rare, and the finding of the right man, and the provision of the right training is not only a matter of the first importance, but one involving a close collaboration between industry and education. Potential managers should be encouraged to visit and to make contacts with other firms. The spirit of rivalry must not be allowed to prevent the broadening of outlook and the ingemination of new ideas that such visits should occasion.

The State must have its appropriate place in post-war reconstruction, and it may be that such public services as transportation, electricity and gas generation, and even mining, may be suited to State management. But bureaucratic control touches no industrial process without

loss and vexation. Whether it handles eggs or coal it can be counted on to provide a minimum of distribution with a maximum of cost and friction. In very truth the Ministries work in a mysterious way their blunders to perform. Public control is all too apt to involve muddle ineptitude, waste, lack of enterprise and even lack of common courtesy under it the time-honoured virtues of common sense and initiative seem to atrophy and die. Promotion by seniority is also responsible for many second rate claimants for leadership getting higher up the ladder than their merits deserve.

So it is one of the qualities of a leader to form a correct opinion as to the power and limitations of his lieutenants—they must be given initiative within necessary limitations and they must fit into the very fabric of the enterprise in which they are engaged. It is not sufficient merely to have competent individuals on a staff—they must be welded into a team responsive to their leader. In these human relationships the leader receives as well as gives and too much dominance rarely pays, and least of all in a commercial enterprise. It would seem desirable that the schoolboy should be taught something of the lives of great leaders in industry in place of so much about the statesmen and the generals. In all leaders concentration on the task is wanted and devotion to its service, but leadership in commerce is more exacting in one respect insomuch as the responsibility is nearly always shared by Boards and Committees and no dictatorial attitude is possible.

The understanding and indeed the treatment of other people is a matter that is very little studied but it is of the essence of leadership. Imagination is necessary here even in the case of the purely dominant leader. The in-

stinct of man gives him little guidance in respect of this treatment. It is so easy to misinterpret others, and to regard principles as prejudices. The beliefs of man have a determining part to play in the structure of society if freedom is to mean anything. Social psychology is the science that deals with this subject, and it is one that is much neglected. It is so easy to get a bastard type of freedom—we have it to-day in the much vaunted freedom of the Press. This includes in an even greater measure the freedom to suppress, and these two freedoms are scarcely compatible. Human personality varies more in the sphere of moral sensitivity than in most others, but it is a significant truth that the gift of understanding is one to be prized almost more than any other.

Unfortunately it is not in every industry that the right spirit exists between management and labour, and taken by and large the fault is on both sides. Managers are liable to be arbitrary and limited in their outlook, and on the workers side there are some so wedded to the notion of democracy (taken to mean that each man is as good as his neighbour if not better) that there is an active dislike of the idea of leadership as a natural human instinct with its correlation of loyalty to the leader. It has already been shewn that in all types of society the leader is not difficult to find—indeed it even appears in the animal world. Watch what happens in any accident—when a car turns over, for example, in a frosty street. Someone turns up and takes charge and others are ready to take orders from the man most capable of finding the right solution to the immediate problem.

No-one likes to be thought of as a mere cog in a machine, and one of the main causes of industrial discontent is the

impersonal attitude of modern industry which treats the operatives as so many 'hands'. Organised work in industry becomes intolerably oppressive when opportunities for advancement are denied to those who are best fitted to take advantage of them—when promotion is merely a matter of seniority or worse still when nepotism is rampant and the best job is given to a man just because he is his father's son.

Something has already been written of the importance of research work in the life of a University. This is even more true of industry and the relation between industrial and academic research must be close. There is in India a great and pressing need of scientists and that in the sense of men with a sound knowledge of scientific principles—India has already too many of the type that have secured science degrees by the possession of brains of the consistency of blotting paper with a knowledge of undigested facts culled from ancient text books. Industrial firms will want many more men with the necessary training to act as scientific advisers. India is far from realising the importance of scientific work in the same way as some other countries. Before the war the total budget for science in the Soviet Union was 1 percent of the national income the figure being three-tenth in U.S.A. In Britain it was but one-tenth of 1 percent and in India the fraction is probably very much smaller.

Examples in hard cash of the value of research abound in every direction. It is estimated that the gas filled lamp represents an annual saving of close on one hundred million rupees in electric lighting in India alone while the improved efficiency of the internal combustion engine due to the anti-pinking effect of lead ethyl saves thousands of

millions of gallons of petrol per annum. Research in many matters other than those of war have been in full swing since 1939. New material in clothing should virtually abolish the overcoat owing to their superior insulating properties. Nylon is five times stronger than hemp rope and this substitute-silk rivals the genuine article. Plastics make lenses that are unscratchable and practically unbreakable—it also makes admirable dentures. Food dehydration improvements are remarkable. War is not only destroying the world—it is also creating a new one.

We can expect vast changes in construction in all its ramifications after the war—plastics alone will play a great part in this. A whole chassis can now be pressed out simultaneously in plastics. Road transportation must be vastly improved with motor ways for fast traffic, with pedestrians, cyclists and slow moving traffic elsewhere. We cannot allow speed to rule us as a Juggernaut claiming hundreds of victims daily. India has slums in her towns that are a disgrace to a civilized community and this position cannot remain. It is of the first importance that the cost of housing construction should be vastly reduced. This will never be achieved as long as a technique is followed which is in essentials exactly the same as that practised by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, in which houses are made up of many thousands of tiny pieces each laboriously laid by hand. Pre-fabrication is the hope of houses by the million for the millions.

It would seem that economics rather than science is the villain in the piece, it was the confusion in world economics that caused the unnecessary poverty that existed between the two wars, and was in part responsible for the

second. There was an infinity of the worst form of waste—that due to productive power not being used. Mass unemployment, plant idle, land untilled, corn used to run trains coffee dumped into the sea, were all symptoms of this economic malady. There was a world wide lack of income to buy goods that millions were yearning to produce. Only a world view and wise leadership will prevent future misfortunes. A special responsibility rests on the leaders of U.S.A. due to her outstanding economic strength. If they just let things drift, the economic crisis of the nineteen fifties will dwarf the troubles of the nineteen thirties.

Innovation and experiment must be at the very forefront in a live and enterprising business. It is a mistake to think that individual leadership spells autocracy. Committees can be tyrannical to a degree and so can Trade Unions. But the family business is all too liable to suffer from ancestor worship and it is unlikely that the right type of leadership will be handed down to the third and fourth generation. It is a vital matter that the rise of able men to positions of responsibility and control at the top should be possible. There may be room for septuagenarians and octogenarians on a Board but never in managerial posts. In Britain, the Public Utility Corporation—an example of the English genius for compromise—seems to supply in one organisation many of the advantages of both public and private enterprise. Such corporations supply the incentive and opportunity for able men to rise to the top and there have been outstanding examples of such men as Frank Pick, who transformed the competing welter of transport facilities under which London suffered into an integrated and efficient organisa-

tion described with justice by the *Times* as a 'civilizing agency'

The war taught us that it is only a spiritual urge that will drive a people from sacrifice to sacrifice. It is equally certain that a similar spirit must prevail in tackling the problems of reconstruction. That will not be easy in India, where the impact of the war on the houses and homes of the people has not been severely felt. The well-to-do in India have had more than their share of the good things of life—moreover it is a country in which respect for age is very great. But vision is brightest and courage is highest in the young and India's young manhood must have its full say in the changes that are in the womb of the future. The crusading spirit of youth must be tempered by the experience of age. "It's all that the young can do for the old, to shock them and keep them up to date", wrote Bernard Shaw. Orthodoxy and complacency are the twin opponents of progress and both are strong in Indian economic life with mammon as a God controlling the destinies of millions. It is mainly the young who will accept the fact that the old social order is dying and a new economy is close at hand.

For it is crystal clear that we have come to the end of an epoch and that a new way of living and a new order lies ahead. A school of American economists headed by James Burnham suggests that capitalism is losing its powers and will be replaced not by socialism but by the rule of managers. There is certainly a basis of truth in this and we are witnessing a revolution in which the prophets and leaders of the new era will be men possessing a high degree of technical, administrative and managerial ability. Educational establishments such as

Universities have done little to appreciate this in the training they offer to their students. It is a vital matter that more should be done to stimulate and to develop administrative and organisational ability

Slums squalor greed and ugliness are the aftermath where exploitation wins in the industrial race. It is the spirit of service that is wanted in India and elsewhere with the elimination of caste and the cutting out of social prejudice. Personality and leadership are required in this new industrial revolution, with rewards in abundance for enterprise and initiative. Filling in forms will never make creative business nor develop character but love of work for its own sake and pride in craftsmanship will do much. Imagination is wanted and judgment and foresight, for where there is no vision the people perish.

## CHAPTER VIII

### INDIA AT THE CROSS-ROADS

“Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see  
visions”

—Joel

It has already been emphasized that a golden opportunity awaits India in the post-war epoch if she plays her cards aright. In the economic domain she occupies a position well-nigh unique among the warring nations in both having a relatively low internal debt and being also a creditor nation. The U.S.A. most nearly approaches this as she is a creditor country, but Uncle Sam's internal debt is astronomical and it is questionable whether she will be able in the future to maintain a standard of living which is so much higher than elsewhere.

But India's problem is altogether different as in her case it is of the greatest importance that the standard of living and the purchasing power of her vast population should be considerably increased. This will be no easy matter as existing social practices are involved. It is difficult to see for example how the earning capacity of a man can attain a high level when he solely performs a single relatively unimportant and strictly limited operation such as that of a *bhishti*, a *chaprası* or a sweeper.

It is perhaps an impertinence that any comment on the habits of a country should be made by one with only one year of residence—certainly Mr. Beverley Nichols has attempted to do so with a stay of similar duration and has

achieved the miracle of securing unanimity among India's Press in a chorus of united denunciation. One paper commented that a number of Penguin editions of this criticised work were published "which nobody reads" The reason for a number of editions being published under these circumstances was nowhere stated! For the visitor who keeps his eyes and ears open sometimes sees much that is not noticed by the resident and this furnishes the justification for a few remarks in a spirit of criticism, tempered by an appreciation of the great possibilities and future potentialities of a sub-continent with many latent resources and embracing one-fifth of the population of the whole world.

It would seem that there are three outstanding considerations which demand the closest attention in India's post war reconstruction and that compared to these even industry is secondary. These three giants are agriculture, civil engineering and education and all three are closely and intimately inter-connected.

For India is and will always remain pre-eminently an agricultural country with the bulk of her population gain fully occupied in her 700 000 villages and however large is India's industrial development it seems unlikely that more than a relatively small percentage of her teeming millions will become town-dwellers and factory workers for many years at least. Agriculture and the improvement of agriculture is therefore a primary consideration.

Indeed to one born and bred on the English countryside with its well tilled and carefully tended fields nothing is more noticeable on arrival in India than the nature of the tillage. The ancient ploughs never seem to do more than to scratch the surface of the soil and of manure on the land

there is hardly a trace and that in a country teeming with cattle. In many parts of the country there is ample rough timber suitable for fire-wood yet the peasant woman is to be seen industriously making into cakes for burning that cowdung, which is so badly needed to fertilise the soil. The short view seems to prevail everywhere and wasteful methods abound throughout India's agricultural economy and much of this is due to ignorance. Water-conservation is rarely attempted and co-operative methods in marketing are conspicuous by their absence. It is perhaps too much to expect that the Hindu farmer should kill off elderly and diseased cows but until this is done there is little hope of improvements in milk production. Nothing is more striking than a visit to a Military Dairy farm and the contrast between the cattle that are to be seen there and the weak and scraggy beasts elsewhere.

It is only too true that freedom from want is foremost among the clauses of the Atlantic Charter and freedom from hunger and starvation is far from non-existent in India today. And yet there are still millions of acres of land available and yet uncultivated. Much of this can only be brought under cultivation by irrigation, but much of it cannot and will never be irrigated. Even here there are possibilities by suitable means of water-conservation such as 'bunding' along the contours by which means worth-while crops can be produced. It is all a matter of knowledge and organisation. With an increase of population amounting to some 5 millions a year this increase of production is the vital matter in India's economy and no final solution is likely while the present system of land-tenure and fractional holdings still remains. Nothing short of a revolution is likely to bring this about and only

then can major improvements such as mechanization be achieved.

But even without this much can still be done. Agricultural industries such as vegetable and fruit-canning are still in their infancy in India and artificial manures occupy a very small place in farming methods. Atmospheric nitrogen is very little used to make nitrates and modern agricultural machinery is conspicuous by its absence. There must be an increase in production and no single step will secure this. India is on the march but her standards must be raised.

It will be generally agreed that the educated Indian and the Indian graduate in particular is rarely to be seen on the country-side and in the villages. It is the towns that appeal to his tastes but he must be made to realize that it is in the villages that the real heart of India beats and that it is in the rural districts that leadership is most wanted if any advance in education in agriculture, in hygiene and in the amenities of the countryside are to be made.

Consider medicine alone in which it is a fact that the percentage of doctors to patients in the country is far below the admittedly low figure in the towns. It is almost true that rural medical amenities are non-existent—certainly village dispensaries are not so conspicuous as in admittedly backward countries such as Nigeria. Indeed medical science is one of the features in which India is deplorably backward and even the Army has had to be satisfied with the services of partly qualified licentiates because it has been found impossible to obtain enough fully qualified practitioners. The Ayurvedic system of medicine—if system it can be called—holds its sway over

large portions of the populace but even the doctors who have been trained on western lines are very limited both in quality and quantity. And if the doctors are short in number and deficient this is even more true of the nurses, with the added disability that nursing is looked down on almost as a shameful occupation. There is room and more than room for leadership in India's medical and sanitary arrangements.

But to return to India's agriculture in which about 340 million acres of land is under cultivation. Of this, it is reckoned that something over 60 million is irrigated and that it would be feasible to irrigate at least another 40 million without serious difficulty. It is here that so large an increase both in the quality and the quantity of India's food supply is feasible and it is here that the Civil Engineer comes in. For by irrigation it is possible to increase the production in a cultivated area by as much as 100 per cent and especially is this the case with respect to rice, a crop which is the basic food for the inhabitants of vast areas and especially in Bengal. In the case of a country like India whose rainfall is restricted to one-quarter of the year, water conservation is a vital matter. India is a country with almost endless possibilities of water-conservation—not only for irrigation and for town consumption but also for hydro-electric purposes. When water can be used both for power purposes and for normal supply—as for example in the hilly country round Bombay—the importance of the matter is yet further enhanced.

So it is to her Engineers that India must look for many of her improvements and for that increase in production both of food and manufactured commodities that is so

essential. The provision of cheap electrical power is itself of the utmost importance. That some of the Provinces should choose electrical energy as a suitable commodity for taxation is little short of criminal. Luckily for India there have been a large number of young men who have received a very practical training in the profession of Civil Engineering in the ranks of the Indian Engineers and others who have gained expert knowledge in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering in the Indian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. The work of these corps on the active service fronts in conjunction with their British brethren has been outstanding. Moreover India is not lacking in engineering colleges where suitable academic training and a certain amount of workshop practice is taught. Academic knowledge is of course essential to the Civil Engineer but the most vital part of the training is in the field and the average young Indian civilian shews a good deal of reluctance to spend long and uncomfortable days and nights in the jungle with his theodolite and level. It is only by means of this that the real Civil Engineer learns his art. In order to achieve such masterpieces as the Lloyd barrage the possession is necessary of a certain genius for practical affairs coupled with the expenditure of much hard work under the most uncomfortable conditions. Very often the labour of weeks and months is entirely unproductive as various alternative plans are often necessary and hitherto the British Engineer has been the pioneer in such operations which have been of so great benefit to India. In future the Indian Engineer will assume his rightful leadership in this type of work which has a double purpose inasmuch as it not only conserves vast quantities of water but it also prevents much

of the goodness of the soil from being washed out to sea. It will be a work of genuine leadership for the young Indian Civil Engineer to initiate such undertakings

The part that engineers have played and are playing in the material progress of civilization throughout the world is seldom recognised or appreciated. The relative status of the Civil Service and the Public Works Department in India is symptomatic. It is a commonplace that the great advances, which have been achieved in communications and transport and in the comforts and conveniences of life itself, are due to the engineer, but these are only a few of the many examples of his contribution to material civilization. Engineers are all too prone to let their achievements speak for themselves, and to emulate that masterly silence which is one of the more endearing characteristics of the giraffe. It is only necessary to think of the part played in human life by water, gas and electricity to appreciate what the work of the civil engineer means to mankind, and the achievements of the mechanical and of the electrical engineer are even more obvious. The man who plans and carries out vast engineering undertakings must have insight and imagination, together with great determination and power of command. In fact he must be a leader in every sense of the word. Yet for general administrative leadership in India the possession of scientific and technological ability would appear to be almost a disqualification. In which of India's nineteen Universities for example is an engineer enthroned in the Vice-Chancellor's chair and how many engineers have been governors of provinces? The engineer is partly to blame for this as he is liable to talk little and the world is prone to take people at their own valuation.

Indeed the engineer in common with many others is far from recognising the value of scientific method as a powerful means of acquiring new knowledge of truth as well as control over the forces of nature. It introduces us to the possibility of a world of abundance instead of one of scarcity and it is an important agency in man's control over his own destiny. Moreover the engineer both in his training and in his work is all too apt to minimise the importance of the organization of work and the economics of work. Planning is not a subject well suited to class-room treatment but the student should realize its importance at an early stage.

In the carrying out of new irrigation and hydro-electric propositions in India it is surely necessary for the Central Government to initiate the undertakings. Private enterprise is likely to be too impatient of early profit and the province is too small a unit to take the lead in schemes that will often cross provincial boundaries. The aim on the hydro-electric side is ultimately to give India the benefits of a grid system and all the advantages of really cheap and widespread electricity and this is far from the case at present, with 5 annas a unit as quite a normal charge.

But behind problems such as those of agriculture and irrigation stands the even vaster problem of education, for it is education that is the key that enables all other barriers to be overcome. The Sargent scheme provides for a steady and orderly plan which will make India a fully literate country in 40 years. But 40 years is a long period in any single epoch and it has already been emphasized that we are not living in times when normal ordered progress can be regarded as adequate. Excep-

tional conditions demand exceptional measures and with demobilisation those exceptional conditions have surely come

It requires but little thought to realise the educational possibilities inherent in the demobilization of the Indian soldier. It is a subject that calls for imagination, zeal and initiative—all qualities of the very essence of leadership. Even if allowance is made for the vast size and population of India, some 3 million officers and men are surely a leaven that can do much to leaven the whole lump. These men will return to their towns and villages with new standards of living, a wider outlook, and often with considerable skill. In the Services the hampering influence of caste has been largely broken down, new habits of cleanliness and sanitation have been formed and a wider outlook has been engendered. Hundreds of thousands of men have been introduced to the wonders of modern machinery—they are no longer chained down to the level of the bullock-cart. Radio, the internal combustion engine, the bull-dozer, the lorry and many other innovations have become a part and parcel of their lives. All this should be a tremendous asset but—let there be no mistake about it—such an asset can be turned into a liability if the handling of the problem is unwise and unimaginative. This is because frustrations can be so easily set up causing all sorts of ferment and India has more than enough of such unhappy influences already.

One of the biggest problems is the return of the soldier to his village where his wife is a drudge and an ignorant and superstitious drudge at that. Will his new outlook and new habits communicate themselves to her or will she drag him down to his old level? This is the problem

that must be faced and faced quickly and it is just here that leadership is required if disasters are to be avoided.

The average Indian has little interests in the four freedoms of the Atlantic Charter apart from freedom from want and it has been wisely stated that he is far more interested in four freedoms of a very different nature and these are as follows --

- (1) Freedom from hunger debt and insecurity
- (2) Freedom from unnecessary disease.
- (3) Freedom from exaction and the tyranny of petty officials and moneylenders.
- (4) Freedom from ignorance and boredom.

Of these No 1 will be cured by increasing the purchasing power of the masses with consequent increase in the production of consumer goods. No 3 involves the abolition of the present system of land tenure. No 2 involves more and better doctors and nurses and education is also involved in No 4. It is plain that education is at the bottom of India's major problems.

It is the Army itself that must take the lead in many of these post war problems. It is by far the greatest of India's three services and it is a service that is outside politics and regarded with the highest respect by all the parties and communities that comprise that very complex entity termed Hindustan. The Army has already shown a capacity in the sphere of education that has almost put the professional educationists to shame. Soldiers are made literate more quickly than civilian teachers ever thought possible and what is still more important--they are taught to think for themselves and to use initiative and judgment. Even in the material sphere the Army has

built for itself vast colonies of barracks and huttet camps that will serve admirably after the war for schools and colleges

Furthermore it is unlikely that India will be satisfied to let her post-war Army consist of illiterates so that the Army itself will perforce start its own schools to train the recruit *ab initio*. In any case the returning sepoy will go back to his village with a far greater interest in Indian affairs than ever before

Arm-chair theories will never get India or any other country anywhere India's future all depends on the Indian man and the Indian woman and contrary to time-honoured practice it must be the *young* man and—greatest heresy of all—the *young woman* who must take the lead if progress is to be made And that means reading, discussing, forming opinions based on sound judgment and exercising moral courage No democracy is effective unless it is informed and the Indian soldier in particular has to equip himself for peace just as he did for war

For choosing the leader in peace-time activities, there is no reason why the Selection organization that has been used so successfully for war should not be used with suitable modifications Peace time selection lays emphasis on the choosing of the best whereas in war, selection methods aim at choosing leaders that are adequate But whether in peace or war it is necessary to secure an appraisement of the whole man and modern selection methods offer a useful social technique both for the reconstruction period and in normal peace-time working For selection is a search for character and any technique based on a relatively short interview is quite inadequate for this

It has been rightly said that more men have lost their lives—at any rate in the spiritual sense—from fatty degeneration of the mind than ever lost them from fatty degeneration of the heart. The young Indian must get right away from his Safety First outlook and learn to cultivate the spirit of adventure. The most serious difficulties in a nation or a community are those that come from within. It was Aristotle who taught that character was a habit—a moral quality that was inculcated by education and developed by hard work. Oliver Cromwell knew this quite well and he put his faith in his russet coated captains because he knew that they were fired by moral purpose and thus would beat the luxury loving Cavaliers. Discipline is concerned with this and so is self respect and the spirit of brotherhood. This is why India can have high hopes of her ex-Service men because they have been trained on those lines.

But will the young educated Indian Civilian also realise that such qualities are needed of the leaders of a dynamic community in time of peace? Is he fired with a firm determination to use his education to enlarge the quality of human life? It is not too much to say that the future of India is far more concerned with the answer to such questions than with the speed with which she attains that political enfranchisement which is hers when she formulates a plan to attain it.

